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THESIS

A FOCUSED COMPARISON OF SOVIET AND AMERICAN
NATIONAL INTERESTS IN SOUTHWEST ASIA

By

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June 1986

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A FOCUSED COMPARISON OF SOVIET AND AMERICAN NATIONAL
INTERESTS IN SOUTHWEST ASIA

by

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Abstract

The objective of A Focused Comparison of Soviet and American National Interests in Southwest Asia is two fold. First, to develop a framework for analysis by which to compare the national interests of the Soviet Union and the United States. Because of the problem of mirror-imaging Soviet and American views, this analysis carefully attempts to consider the definition of a national interest from both societal perspectives. Second, to apply the framework of analysis to two related case studies; Superpower interests in Afghanistan and Iran. The Southwest Asian region provides an interesting environment to apply this paradigm because of the significant challenges to both Soviet and American positions in light of the Iranian Revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

This analysis concludes with a brief comparison of American and Soviet interests in the region. Given the geostrategic position of the region, the dominant role of ethnicity in Iran and Afghanistan, and risks to superpower prestige, it is obvious that the Soviet Union has a greater intensity of interests in this region.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	6
II.	METHODOLOGY.....	12
	A. WHAT IS A NATIONAL INTEREST.....	12
	B. FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS.....	19
III.	IRAN AS A PAWN; A CASE STUDY.....	27
	A. THE EARLY STRUGGLE.....	27
	B. ANGLO-SOVIET COMPETITION.....	31
	C. WORLD WAR II; INTERVENTION AND U.S. INTEREST.....	37
	D. THE COLD WAR.....	43
	E. REVOLUTION.....	63
IV.	IRAN; A FOCUSED COMPARISON.....	74
V.	AFGHANISTAN IN THE BALANCE; A CASE STUDY.....	82
	A. THE TZARIST LEGACY AND THE GREAT GAME.....	82
	B. INNER WAR.....	103
	C. FROM COLD WAR TO DETENTE.....	123
	D. DEATH OF A MONARCHY TO COMMUNIST POWER.....	144
	E. INTERVENTION AND THE UNWINNABLE WAR.....	162
VI.	AFGHANISTAN; A FOCUSED COMPARISON.....	186
VII.	CONCLUSION.....	193
	INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST.....	202

I. Introduction:

The Southwest Asian region, for ordinary Americans, has taken on significance only recently with the actions of Islamic revolutionaries in Iran, the supposed Iranian support of terrorist actions throughout the world and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. To Americans observing the Soviet Union and not cognizant of history, it would seem that Russian interests in this area have developed only recently with the advent of their intervention in Afghanistan. It would also seem that with southern boundaries distant from the Russian republic and seat of Soviet power, there should be little interest in this region. US Policy makers are prepared to involve our nation in guaranteeing a compromise peace settlement in Afghanistan. They state that the United States has a significant stake in the development and maintenance of peace in South Asia and the Gulf region. Conditions of stability and attitudes of the policy makers of Iran and Afghanistan significantly effect our ability to influence affairs in the region. Compared to the Soviet Union, U.S. involvement in Southwest Asia has a short history. Soviet interests are intense, originating during Tzarist times and evolving to today's conflict.

On Saturday, 28 December 1985, President Reagan announced that "the United States is willing to serve as 'garantor' of a peace settlement"¹. The same day the Manchester Guardian (England)

¹As reported by the New York Times, 29 December 1985, 5. and by the major television networks during their evening broadcasts 28, 29, and 30 Dec. 1985. The MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour on the PBS Network carried an interview with Mr. Nicholas A. Yeliotis, Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Dept. of State, in which he discussed the significance of the President's comments pertaining action as an agent in the Afghanistan conflict.

reported that Soviet policy in Asia as a whole continues to be hampered by the Afghan war, stating that Moscow observers feel that the Soviet Union is hinting at 'broadening political dialogue' aimed at ending six years of war. In the Soviet Union the costs of involvement in this Muslim sphere of the world are becoming visible. US News and World Report detailed the domestic costs and responses by the Soviet state, indicating that there are signs that Soviet citizens are growing steadily tired of casualties as the diplomatic and economic costs of maintaining the war effort continue.² What motivates the Soviet Union and the United States to involve themselves in this region of the world? Why should the President seek to guarantee a peace settlement in Southwest Asia? At the same time, why does the Soviet Union continue to press onward?

This thesis examines the national interests of the United States and the Soviet Union in South West Asia. First, this analysis will examine the concept of National Interest and develop a framework for analyzing and comparing the interests of the Soviet Union and the United States in the region. Second, using a case study format, the development of superpower interests in the region will be analyzed. Finally, a focused comparison of the U.S. and Soviet concerns as they have developed to this day will be made, keying on the intensity of various types of interests. Islam is a significant factor in both Iran and Afghanistan; this region could be described as Islamic South Asia. Therefore, the importance of this variable will be carefully considered.

²US News and World Report , 16 Dec 1985, 42.

In 1984, Seth Singleton wrote that "Americans confuse themselves and the issues with politically inspired debates which misunderstand Soviet thinking."³ This study will attempt to avoid confusing the issue by critically analyzing the question from both the American and Soviet perspective and considering the influence of Islam to both superpowers.

Since Iran and Afghanistan occupy only a portion of this diverse region, it is useful to consider briefly the complete context of policy toward the area. Recently, Lawrence Ziring wrote that Southwest Asia "has become in the 1980s, what Southeast Asia was in the 1960s." He described the northern tier buffer as a primary interest for the United States because its strategic and geopolitical position places United States and Soviet interests in head to head competition. "The northern tier states may form the historical pivot for the remaining decades of the twentieth century." He continued to illustrate the recent Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, revolution in Iran, and recent instability in Turkey, as actions which have forced the United States to pullback from its former forward position on the Soviet border and relook at our policy options in the region. Ziring writes. . . "There can be no mistaking a shift in forces that favors the Soviet Union"⁴

Yet, since the Afghanistan invasion the Soviet Union has been unable to either resolve the conflict or win a complete victory.

³Seth Singleton, "Defense of the Gains of Socialism: Soviet Third World Policies in the mid- 1980s", The Washington Quarterly (Winter, 1984), 103.

⁴Lawrence Ziring, Iran, Turkey, and Afghanistan: A Political Chronology, (New York: Praeger, 1981), vii.

Additionally, while entrenched in Afghanistan, the Soviets find themselves in a number of difficult positions throughout the rest of Southwest Asia. In Iran, the Soviets are described as the 'lesser satan' vis a vis the United States. They find themselves challenged in their Central Asian republics with the general growth of a Muslim population as the Slavic representation decreases. In Pakistan, the historic 'Great Game' continues as the United States has assumed the challengers role in the vacuum of British withdrawal after the Second World War. If perhaps there has been a shift in the correlation of forces to the Soviet advantage, is it a permanent shift?

The thread linking all the nations of this region, despite the diversity of Islamic belief as characterized by Sunni and Shi'a sects, is Islam. The significance of the Muslim factor in the past has been overlooked by both the United States and the Soviet Union. Michael Rywkin in Moscow's Muslim Challenge and Bennigsen and Broxup in The Islamic Threat to the Soviet State⁵ have examined the growing importance of the Islam to the Soviet Union. One of the major factors responsible for the continuation of resistance in Afghanistan is the consistent opposition of the Mujihaddin. The importance of Islam is also evident in Iran, where it remains a significant factor of legitimacy for the revolution. Some authors have argued that our failure to understand its role contributed to our loss of influence in Iran with the fall of the Shah and the success of the Islamic revolution. In Pakistan,

⁵Alexandre Bennigsen and Marie Broxup, The Islamic Threat to the Soviet State. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983). and Michael Rywkin, Moscow's Muslim Challenge: Soviet Central Asia. (New York: Sharpe, 1982).

the Zia regime bases its stability and continuation on a continuing policy of 'Islamization' to secure domestic support. While it can be argued that Islam can be as divisive as it is unifying, it would be myopic to ignore its significance in this region of the world. Certainly, it must be considered as a challenge to Soviet internal control, just as across its southern border. For the United States it is important to understand how Islam contributes to the legitimacy and stability of governments in the region and the potential challenges or support this religion provides for our own policies in the region.

Soviet presence in this region is the legacy of its Tzarist past. Since the time of Peter the Great, an important Russian goal has been the acquisition of warm water ports. Hegemonistic territorial expansion is only one of several possible theories put forward to explain Soviet moves on its Southern frontier. Other theories include: a historic preoccupation with security and fear of encirclement by foes, opportunity for economic imperialism, an attempt to offset potential challenges internally by Islamic fundamentalism (either on an official basis or by sufi orders), a goal to establish a regional presence to set the global correlation of forces in their favor, and an attempt to fill the vacuum of power created with the retreat of British power.

As pointed out earlier, US interest in Southwest Asia is relatively recent. American interests became evident with the announcement of the Truman Doctrine in 1947. This was the point of departure for

American foreign policy in the cold war.⁶ By 1947, the United States had come to take Britain's place in the struggle for pro-western influence in Southwest Asia. U.S. goals in this region are multi-leveled. Economically, the protection of the Persian Gulf oil lanes is significant. Strategically, this region of the world is the soft underbelly of the Soviet Union. "The strategic value of the flank (the Northern Tier) should be viewed in terms of (1) the key role in the Mediterranean; (2) the region's geostrategic relationship. . . and (3) its contribution to NATO. . ." ⁷. Politically, this region has significance for the safe keeping and maintenance of the world order. Since the Iranian revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, this region has taken on renewed importance for the US.

Before examining the development of Soviet and American national interests, it is important to define the concept of 'national interest'. The second section of this paper seeks to review the literature on the national interest and build an analytical framework useful in explaining interests in South West Asia.

⁶John L. Gaddis, Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy, (New York; Oxford University Press, 1982) contains a detailed discussion of this point as does Part IV of Erik P. Hoffmann/Frederic J. Flernon, Jr. The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy , (New York: Aldine Publishing, 1980).

⁷Jed C. Snyder, "Strategic Bias and Southern Flank Security", The Washington Quarterly, (Summer 1985): 123.

II. Methodology:

A. WHAT IS A NATIONAL INTEREST?

What is a national interest? Is there a standard definition for this concept? Is the national interest of the United States the same as that for the Soviet Union? These are difficult and often unanswered questions. Before continuing, two points should be considered. First, a precise, universal operational definition of 'National Interest' quite possibly is an unreachable goal. And second, comparing and contrasting American and Soviet national interests can be a difficult and confusing task. This chapter will attempt to briefly review the field of literature on the national interest and having done so to develop an operational framework by which to explain and compare the interests of the superpowers.

Various methods have been used to attempt to analyze the national interests of the Soviet Union and the United States. Methods have been developed to determine what these interests are, how they interact and how they compare and contrast. Authors differ greatly in their approaches and in their models. However, few attempts to devise a system which compares and contracts the interests of the Soviet Union and the United States have been devised. Valenta and Butler in 1981 examined the interests and objectives of Soviet Policy in South West Asia using a conceptual frame work adapted from K.J. Holsti's International Politics: A Framework for Analysis. In "Soviet National Security Decision-making: What Do We Know and What Do We Understand?", Stephen M. Meyer summarizes various methods and

models for the analysis of Soviet decision making. Likewise, Hannes Adomeit in 1982 looked at Soviet risk-taking in crisis situations using the factors of ideology, security and state interest, military power and the effects of domestic politics on their decision making process. Adam Ulam in much of his writing uses a more historical and descriptive, yet less scientific and rigorous method of analysis.¹ Yet these methods attempt to examine only the Soviet interest.

Soviet analysts tend to fall into various schools of thinking which describe the nature of Soviet political decision making but discount the role of legitimate state interests. The Soviet system has been described by Spiro, Friedrich, Brzezinski and Arendt, as a totalitarian system with several distinct features; an imposed organization, forced participation, unpredictable due to the personal control of a dictator, violence and suppression of opposition². Analysts have used variants of Kremlinology, Bureaucratic Politics, Interest Group analysis and

¹Jiri Valenta and Sharon R. Butler, Soviet Interests, Objectives, and Policy Options in Southwest Asia, (Carlisle Barracks, Pa: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1981); K.J. Holsti, International Politics: A Framework for Analysis, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1983); Stephen M. Meyer, "Soviet National Security Decision Making: What Do We Know and What Do We Understand?", Soviet Decision-making for National Security (London: Allen and Unwin, 1984), 255-297; Hannes Adomeit, Soviet Risk-Taking and Crisis Behavior: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, (London: Allen and Unwin, 1982).

²Herbert J. Spiro, "Comparative Politics: A Comprehensive Approach", American Political Science Review, 1962, 56:577-595. Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy, 2nd ed. (New York: Praeger, 1965). Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, 2nd ed. (New York: Meridian, 1958).

Political Culture' to explain why the Soviets act in their chosen manner.³ However, the above methods are hindered in this type of study because of their self imposed limits. They tend to analyze the Soviet Union from one side, are sometimes controversial in their interpretations or definitions, and have little utility in the comparison of Soviet and US positions.

Similarly, the examination of United States national interests are as varied as the a basic definition for the national interest. Hans J. Morganthau in In Defense of the National Interest and Henry Kissinger in Problems of National Security attempt to analyze the components of our national interest. Morganthau examines the national interest in strictly terms of foreign policy. He looks at three main periods of US foreign policy; the realistic period, the ideological period and the utopian period. Morganthau's thesis is that American post-war foreign policy has been marked by four intellectual errors; legalism, utopianism, sentimentalism and neo-isolationism. While Morganthau sees the national interest as a major force guiding the formulation and execution of foreign policy, he never develops the concept into an operational definition. Furthermore he does not attempt to analyze the national

³ For examples see: For Kremlinology; George W. Breslauer, "Political Succession and the Soviet Policy Agenda", Problems of Communism, May-June 1980. William G. Hyland, "Kto Kovo" in the Kremlin", Problems of Communism, Jan-Feb 1982. Jerry F. Hough, "Soviet Succession: Signs of Struggle", Problems of Communism, Sept-Oct 1982.; For Bureaucratic Politics Raymond Tanter and Richard H. Ullman ed, "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications", Theory and Policy in International Relations, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972); For Interest Group and Elite perspectives see William Zimmerman, "Elite Perspectives and the Explanation of Soviet Foreign Policy", Journal of International Affairs, XXIV:1 1970, 84-98. For Political Culture see Nathan Leites, A Study of Bolshevism, (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1953) and Alexander L. George, "The 'Operational Code': A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making", International Studies Quarterly, XIII:2 (June, 1969), 190-222.

interest of our principle foe, the Soviet Union.⁴ Graham T. Allison's Essence of Decision uses the respective positions of the United States and the Soviet Union during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis as the basis for analysis. He examines the process of decision making from three perspectives, from the rational actor model, from the organizational process model and from the bureaucratic politics model. Allison deals with the process and motivations of decision making rather than the underlying interests which motivated their decisions. Allison's models attempt to explain rather than compare intensity of interest of both superpowers in the Cuban situation. He does not deal with interests as a separate concept.⁵

Glendon Schubert, in The Public Interest, attempts to arrive at a theory of national interest. His primary assumption is that the public interest is the central concept of democratic theories of government. This immediately excludes the possibility that the Soviet Union could be analyzed using the same concept since their's is not a democratic government in the same sense as the American context. Schubert's analysis of the national interest concentrates upon the actors involved in the process of interpreting the collective public will into goals and objectives of public interest. Schubert categorizes the body of literature on the national interest into three types; Rationalist theory, Idealist theory and Realist theory. His conclusion is that there is not a single unified or consistent theory which describes how the public

⁴Hans J. Morganthau, In Defense of the National Interest: A Critical Examination of American Foreign Policy, (New York: Knopf, 1951).

⁵Graham T. Allison, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co. 1971).

interest is defined in terms of governmental decision-making. His analysis focuses solely on the United States.⁶ Carl Friedrich's The Public Interest, is a gathering of various writer's short works on the national interest. Each of the nineteen contributors to this edited piece attempt to build a framework from which to analyze and describe public interest. Each of the writers agrees that the public interest is vital to the formulation and execution of policy. Again, no one theory is derived which encompasses an operational definition for the national interest or that can be used to compare the interests of the United States with the Soviet Union.⁷

The above authors describe many factors which must be considered in an examination of the interests which compel a given nation to respond or act in a specific situation. However, a comparison of interests of the Soviet Union and the United States must be undertaken carefully and must consider the inherent differences. The most difficult problem is attempting to compare two distinctively different political worlds, one pluralistic and fluid, the other ensconced in the philosophy of Marxist-Leninism and traditional Russian political culture. Any analysis seeking to compare the interests of these two superpowers must be careful not to mirror-image the respective actors.

In a Summer 1984 Foreign Policy article, Dimitri Simes pointed out the problem of perspective in comparing the interests of the US and USSR. Referring to the 1979 Soviet invasion, he explained that in the

⁶Glendon Schubert, (Glencoe, Ill. The Free Press, 1960).

⁷Carl Friedrich, The Public Interest, (New York: Atherton Press, 1962).

eyes of Americans, it is a preposterous thought that an independent Afghanistan is an intolerable threat to Soviet security concerns. Most Americans supported President Reagan in his decision to involve U.S. forces in the Grenada invasion because the tiny island nation was too politically close to Cuba and therefore a threat to the security of the United States. As described in Allison's book, Khrushchev's decision to send missiles to Cuba was seen in the U.S. as a "brutal provocation". Americans "contemptuously dismiss" the Soviet position that deployment of Pershing II and Ground Launched Cruise Missiles (GLCMs) in Europe is a threat to Soviet national security. On the other hand, the Soviets become very sensitive to any possibility of American influence in the Polish crisis, while at the same time continuing to send aid to guerillas in El Salvador, the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, maintaining a de facto alliance with Cuba and building 'fraternal socialist relations' with Grenada. . . "right in America's backyard. The difficulty in understanding each other's concerns also reflects the strong American and Soviet belief in the righteousness of their respective causes..."⁸. While the interests of the Soviet Union and the United States are similar given different perspectives, they remain different given the context of each nations political culture and decision making process.

While carefully seeking not to mirror-image the national interests of the Soviet Union and the United States, their

⁸Dimitri K. Simes, "The New Soviet Challenge", Foreign Policy, 55(Summer 1984): 129.

developmental background is important to keep in mind . Bruce R. Kuniholm astutely points out that there is at least one significant parallel between the superpowers. This deals with ideology. He explains that as American interests in South West Asia grew from the traditional British-Russian rivalry they took on a different character. The British-Russian rivalry concerned spheres of power influence. However, the United States and Soviet Union compete on a different plane. "The ideological baggage which accompanies them tends to confuse the conflict by portraying their rival national interests as a clash between world views, rooted in the different philosophies of Wilson and Lenin." Kuniholm continues with a particularly appropriate quote from George Kennan. . .Both Russians and Americans have

a tendency to attribute to their own political ideology a potential universal validity- to perceive in it virtues that ought, as one thought, to command not only imitation on the part of other peoples everywhere but also the moral authority and ascendancy of the respective national center from which these virtues are proceeding.⁹

Keeping in mind the problems of comparing and contrasting the national interests of the Soviet Union and the United States, it becomes important to choose a framework which allows for the explanation of these differences and compensates for them.

⁹Bruce R. Kuniholm, The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East , (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1980), xviii. Kennan is quoted from an article in the Saturday Review... George Kennan, "Is Detente Worth Saving?" Saturday Review, 6 March 1976, 12-17.

B. FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS.

This essay will use a variation of the 'Focused Comparison Method' of analysis developed by Alexander L. George in "Case Studies and Theory Development: The Method of Structured Focused Comparison".¹ George's method requires that general but standardized questions be formed and asked for each case in a focused comparison study. Donald E. Nuechterlein, in National Interests and Presidential Leadership: The Setting of Priorities , developed an analytical framework for the examination of national interests which can easily be adapted for the purpose of this study. Nuechterlein's framework provides a systematic method of analyzing the national interest of an international actor. By considering each actor separately and determining his level of interest in the region, it is possible to avoid the pitfall of mirror-imaging. This study will combine Nuechterlein's variables in a systematic manner as recommended by the 'Focused Comparison Method' to examine the interests of Soviet Union and the United States in South West Asia.

One additional variable which is not required by the Nuechterlein method, but which is critical to the development of this study, is how each actor responds or reacts to the dominant religious and cultural values of the area. In this case, Islam. Since Islam is the common thread linking the nations in the region, it is important to consider how or if the Soviet Union and the United States deal with Islam. Do they

¹Alexander L. George, "Case Studies and Theory Development: The Method of Structured Focused Comparison". in P.G. Lauren ed. Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory and Policy, (New York: Free Press, 1979), 44-68.

accommodate for it, or ignore it, in developing policies toward the region? In both nations under study here, Islam has historically played an important role. Today, Islam continues to be a critical legitimizing and unifying factor in both Iran and Afghansitan. Although differing somewhat in implementation, to ignore its utility and intensity in South West Asia would be to significantly underestimate its impact on the political and cultural way of life in the area.

To avoid any misunderstanding or ambiguity in examining the concerns of the actors in this study, it is necessary to define the term --national interest. According to Nuechterlein the national interest is "the perceived needs and desires of one sovereign state in relation to the sovereign states comprising its external environment."² Nuechterlein further qualifies this definition to include several important assumptions. First, he says that the national interest of a nation deals with the environment external to the given state. Problems dealing with the domestic situation are discounted. To totally discount the domestic challenges a state faces could be naive, because they do affect the perceived needs of a nation. Simple examples of this are readily available. One example is the enraged spirit of the American people following the initiation of the Iranian hostage crisis in 1979. Another is the pervading hostile public sentiment toward the Japanese after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941. In these instances, the attitudes of the American public certainly affected the perceived

²Donald E. Nuechterlein, National Interests and Presidential Leadership: The Setting of Priorities. (Boulder, Co., Westview Press, 1978), 3.

desires of the nation as interpreted by policy makers. Nuechterlein accounts for this factor with his second consideration.

The definition of the national interest should seek to incorporate more than a simple objective analysis of fact. Nuechterlein points out that "the determination of a nation's interests is the result of a political process in which conflicting private interests, bureaucratic politics and the so-called dispassionate view of the facts by planners play a role- and should play a role." Third, this definition implies that decisions, which concern the perceived needs of the state are results from a political process. The end result of this process is a decision about the relative importance to the nation of an external event. Since this study will examine two entirely different political systems, it is important to realize that although the details of the process may differ, the end result is a decision. In other words, it is the decision itself which counts, not the process. In this case the end interest is more important than the process by which it comes about.

There is one additional assumption. The term state can refer only to a sovereign nation. It cannot be used to define an international organization, a multinational corporation or other non-sovereign international actor. This is despite of the fact that extra-national actors in today's world do play an important role in the international milieu. According to the author..."for better or worse, we live in a world where decisions to use force, to impose trade restrictions, to enter

alliances and to provide foreign aid are made only by the governments of sovereign states.”³

The national interest according to the analytical framework which will be used in this paper is divided into five types of interests. These five basic categories of interest are: Defense of homeland, Economic well being, Favorable world order, Ideological goals and Islam. Their combination, competition, and balance result in the policies of a nation's political system. Each of these interests is analyzed in terms of intensity. Nuechterlein assumes several facts about the relationship among variables: (1) There is no priority among variables, (2) Variables are “not mutually exclusive and policy makers must accept trade-offs among them” (3) While one variable may not at all times be strictly adhered to, all variables are assumed to be important components of the national interest, and (4) The balance among variables is dynamic, changing over time as measured in months and years.⁴

Accordingly, the variables that will be analyzed are defined as follows:

Defense of Homeland

Incorporates the defensive interests or security needs of the nation. This variable accounts for the need for protection of the state and its members from the threat. The threat is analyzed differently by various states. To the United States the threat is considered multi-leveled,

³Nuechterlein,3.

⁴Nuechterlein,5.

capable and in a constant state of flux. This variable also excludes alliances.

Economic well being

Considers the economic condition of the nation. It is assumed that each actor will try to maximize his economic condition by protecting his trades routes, establishing tariffs, quotas, embargoes, arranging loans and credits on the world market, or using any number of other instruments to maintain or improve his position. This variable considers a nations need to defend its own relative economic interests.

World Order

Accounts for the relationship of a nation in the balance of power as part of the world system of states. Nations will attempt to develop and operate in a world system which is balanced or in which the balance of power is in their favor. For the Soviet Union, this variable discounts the existence of an international communist movement, highlighting instead the Soviet role as an independent superpower.

Ideological Goals

Seek to account for the tendency of states to protect their own ideological system while spreading their system of values to others. The Soviet Union, using Marxist-Leninist ideology, openly admits to seeking to further the goals of their Ideology. In recent years as western analysts have argued that Soviet ideology is dead, however, references to the ultimate victory of the socialist system over the capitalist system have not stopped in the Soviet press. Marxist-Leninist ideology continues to be a pervasive banner in the Soviet

Union. In contrast, the United States does not always openly admit that we seek to spread our system of values, but similarly American ideology is at the forefront of foreign policies.

Islam

Since Islam is such a pervasive force in South West Asia, this variable refers to how an actor relates to or accounts for the dominant form of religious and moral values in the region. Whereas ideology refers to how an actors own beliefs and values are considered, Islam as a variable seeks to accommodate the ideological system of the subject nation toward the actor. This factor could be referred to as ethnicity, or reaction to native nationalism.

Each of the above variables is rated according to the its intensity of interest. Intensity of interest is determined by subjectively accounting for value and cost factors as shown below. Intensity is defined as the "stake which the political leadership of a country believes is involved." It is in determining the degree of interest, that trade-offs among the interest variables become evident. For example, at this stage, the policy maker may determine that while there is a high degree of potential for economic gain in a given situation, there may be an equally high degree of risk to the security of the nation. Therefore, since there is a high degree of risk, it may not be an advantage to maximize economic gain.

In this study, four varying degrees of intensity will be judged. A variable interest may be considered: (1) A survival issue, "when the very existence of a nation-state is in jeopardy, as a result of overt

military attack on its own territory, or from the threat of attack if an enemy's demands are rejected." (2) A vital issue, "when serious harm will very likely result to the state unless strong measures are employed to counter adverse action. . ." (3) A major issue, "when a state's political, economic and ideological well-being may be adversely affected by events and trends in the international environment and require corrective action in order to prevent becoming serious threats (or vital issues)."⁵ (4) A peripheral issue, if intensity is minimal and not threatening.

In determining whether an interest is a vital or a survival issue it is necessary to assess trade-offs of value or benefit and cost or risk. Nuechterlein has outlined sixteen factors which must be considered and subjectively balanced against one another in determining the degree to which a variable is significant. These essential factors are:

<u>Value/ Benefit factors</u>	<u>Cost/Risk factors</u> ⁶
Proximity of danger	Economic cost
Nature of threat	Potential casualties
Economic gain	Risk of protracted conflict
Sentimental attachment	Risk of enlarged conflict
Type of Government	Cost of defeat/stalemate
Effect on balance of power	Risk of public/party opposition
National prestige at stake	Risk of UN opposition
Policies of key allies	Risk of congressional
	opposition or loss of legitimacy.

To avoid mirror-imaging the Soviet Union and the United States each of these factors must be assessed individually and in context with the political system of the nation. Also, it is necessary to consider each of

⁵Nuechterlein, 11.

⁶Table adapted from Nuechterlein, 20.

these factors in relation to the others to get the overall 'big' picture involved. Using the method outlined above it will be possible to determine the intensity of variables which comprise to the national interest of each nation.

National Interests are subject to change over time. Both in Iran and Afghanistan, the history of U.S. and Soviet interests is important to developing an understanding of present day interests. Over time both superpowers have changed their policies towards this region according to immediate concerns. A brief analysis will show that Soviet concerns appear to have a much longer and more intense history than those of the United States.

III. IRAN AS A PAWN: A CASE STUDY

Iran has a long history of foreign influence in its internal affairs as a result of competition for power. Located along the British route to its eastern empire and to the south of Russia's soft underbelly, Iran has always been positioned as a challenge to the great power control. This challenge was not so much a threat by Iranians to assume control, but a struggle by the great powers to prevent complete domination by the opposition. As its oil grew more important to the economies of the great powers, and Iran's own weaknesses were exploited, this region grew to even greater significance as a pawn in the great power struggle. An examination of Iran's role in the international balance of power game is highlighted by five periods. These are: (A) The early struggle before 1907. (B) the Anglo-Soviet struggle in the inter war years. (C) The Allies in WWII. (D) The evolution and struggle of the cold war. (E) The Islamic revolutionary struggle.¹

A. The Early Struggle

Great power concern over the control of Persia stems from the nineteenth century. Although, as early as the 14th century Russia had established trade routes and commercial ties with Iran. Richard Pipes

¹While authors differ in their approach to the great power struggle in Iran according to their interpretation of events, I have chosen this periodization because I feel that it best describes the evolution of current day significance of the Iranian case study in light of the US and Soviet competition for influence in this region. Bruce R. Kuniholm in The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East points out the significance of the name 'Persia' vs. 'Iran'. He explains that Iranians have always called this country Iran but that the British did not adopt the tradition until 1935 following the insistence of the Shah of Iran. This study will use the term interchangeably.

noted the importance of eastern ties with Iran during the Tzardom of Moscovy. After the early ties Moscovy, . .

remained oriented towards the east even after the Golden Horde had dissolved and Moscow had entered into commercial relations with western Europe. The conquest in the 1550s of Kazan and Astrakhan, both of them important entrepôts of oriental and Middle Eastern goods, increased Russian involvement with eastern markets. Until the eighteenth century, Russia's foreign trade was directed primarily towards the middle east, especially Iran; of the three bazaars in Moscow in the second half of the seventeenth century, one dealt exclusively with Persian merchandise.²

If one accepts the thesis that the European great powers controlled the development of more "backward countries" in the late 1800s, then the fate of Persia, Afghanistan and the Indian Empire can be more clearly explained. Gordon A. Craig writes that the period from 1871 to 1914 was the 'European Age of Imperialism'. During the early nineteenth century most of the European powers were interested in only consolidating their own power bases, being concerned mostly by domestic problems and immediate neighbors. Only Britain was concerned initially with "accumulation of dependencies". During the latter part of the century motivations changed. ". . .the 1880s and 1890s were years in which the European powers not only consolidated their existing non-European possessions but sought feverishly to add to them, with little regard for expense or for political dangers involved . . . empire building became the accepted policy of all major powers and was supported by public opinion with a fervor that cut across class and economic lines."³

²Richard Pipes, Russia Under the Old Regime, (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1974), 204.

³Gordon A. Craig, Europe, 1815-1914, 3rd ed. (Hinsdale, Ill: The Dryden Press, 1972), 400.

Russian and British competition came to a head in South West Asia during the period from 1896-1907. Although primarily dealing with Afghanistan, competition for power and influence did involve Persia. The Anglo-Russian rivalry continued until and beyond the signature of the Anglo-Russian entente in August 1907. Russia, weakened by its losses in the Russo-Japanese war and concerned by German advances into Persia during that period, was willing to seek a way to maintain its gains. An alliance with Britain seemingly provided several advantages. Britain was allied with both the Japanese and the French. France could provide badly needed capital for quelling the degenerating domestic situation in Russia. The British on the other hand, were also concerned about German advances in the Persian Gulf. Additionally, for the British lessening the tensions over the situation in Afghanistan provided the opportunity to solve a dispute which had almost erupted into open warfare several times in the past.⁴

The Anglo-Russian Entente was concluded on 31 August, 1907. It provided for zones of influence. Persia was divided into three zones: the northern portion being reserved for the Russians, the southeast for the British and sandwiched between them, "a belt left open for concessions between them".⁵ The Persians were not included in the agreement but both Russia and Britain agreed that the country's integrity should be respected. Gordon Craig writes,

As for Persia, while emphasizing their intention of preserving the country's independence and assuring other nations that their commercial rights would be

⁴Craig, 434. and Bruce R. Kuniholm, 131.

⁵William L. Langer, An Encyclopedia of World History, 5th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1972), 897.

respected, they proceeded to divide it into three zones. The British were acknowledged to have a virtual protectorate over the southernmost of these....Each power agreed not to seek economic concessions in the area allotted to the other; and together they tacitly agreed to bar Germany from Persia as a whole.The Anglo-Russian agreement was one more example of the high-handedness of the imperialistic powers when dealing with backward countries.⁶

By the time of the signature of the Anglo-Russian Entente, there were several trends obvious in the great power competition. The Russians were interested in expansion to the south for trade, territory, and to offset the interests of the Germans. At the same time their domestic situation was in difficult balance, having undergone a revolution in 1905 the Tzar's power base was tentative.⁷ "After 1905, however, the Russians pressured internally, and reacting to the alliance of the Central Powers in Europe, began to reassess their policies in the Near East and the relationship with Great Britain."⁸ The British also had several reasons to be concerned about the region. First was the protection of their interests in India. A safe and secured Persia was considered a vital interest. Second was the control of Russian expansion to the south. And, as indicated above, a third concern was the control of German influence. Although Iran had granted an oil exploration concession to an Australian in 1901, it was not considered critical at the time of the Anglo-Russian Entente since there was no certainty of oil in the area. Oil was not discovered in the

⁶Craig, 434.

⁷Theodore VonLaue in Why Lenin? Why Stalin?: A Reappraisal of the Russian Revolution, 1900-1930, (New York: Lippincott, 1971) treats the 1905 revolution as a minor event. However he hastens to point out that even though there was no transfer of power, the Tzar's regime came to the brink of collapse and Nicholas II was forced to grant concessions to the people. He was forced to grant basic civil liberties and form the Duma.

⁸Masch, 33.

region until 1908, at that time the British became grateful because the oil reserves were located in their zone of influence.⁹

American policy toward Iran during this period was very limited. Aside from a Presbyterian Church founded in 1835, the United States had little contact until its first diplomatic mission in 1883. "The American government had no intention of challenging Britain's primacy in the Near East and the American mission in Persia assumed only a passive role."¹⁰ The Persians, on the other hand, were interested in obtaining American support. Iran made numerous attempts to develop ties with the US. William Morgan Shuster headed the first financial mission to Iran. The State Department went to great effort to downplay the Shuster mission. "Shuster unfortunately managed to irritate the Russians by doing a good job in Iran and finally was forced out by Russian pressure on Tehran. The Russian demand for the ouster of Shuster was supported by London which still needed Russian cooperation in European politics."¹¹

B. Anglo-Soviet Competition; Communists on the Scene

The second period that should be closely examined is the era which followed the Bolshevik seizure and consolidation of power and the building of the Soviet Union. The 'Great War' and the events surrounding it had great significance for Britain, Russia and Persia.

⁹Discussed at length in Arlyn B. Wasserberg, Politics of Soviet Interference: Soviet Foreign Policy Towards Iran, (Ph.D. Dissertation: City University of New York, 1979) and in Kuniholm, The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East.

¹⁰Kuniholm, 189.

¹¹Wasserberg, 48.

Needless to say, the signature of the Anglo-Russian Entente did not herald the end of competition in Persia. Russian and later Soviet troops were to occupy portions of Iran. The British, with the discovery of oil did not seek to relinquish any form of control. In fact the formation of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company served as a mechanism to secure control. Iran, for its part, continued to seek third party involvement from the United States to offset the British and the Soviets. For the newly created Soviet Union, the addition of Marxist-Leninist ideology became the newest element in the traditional 'Great Game'. "Persia was now seen as a key to a general Marxist revolution in Asia. Soviet Policy toward Persia (Iran) from 1917 to Stalin's death in 1953 can be characterized as a series of attempts to gain control of Iran through the use of local Communist groups, at times with the backing of Soviet military force."¹² By the end of this period Soviet and British forces were to invade, and install leadership favorable to their occupation.

British fears of Russian subversion and interference in internal Persian affairs were coupled with the fear of expansionist aims. The Persian revolution which had begun in 1905 and led to the formation of the first national assembly or *majlis* in July 1906, erupted into civil war by 1908. The Russians were opposed to reforms, brought by the first Persian constitution which the Shah was forced to sign on 7 October 1906. To Russia, this meant that there might be a loss of influence. The Shah, with Russian assistance, attempted a coup d'etat in December

¹²U.S. Congress. Joint Economic Committee. "The Impact of the Iranian Revolution on the Soviet Union", by William H. Cooper, Congressional Research Office, Joint Committee Print, A Compendium of Papers dealing with the Economic Consequences of the Revolution in Iran. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1980.

1907. A second attempt was successful in June 1908. Russia reversed its position and with British support invaded northern Persia in March 1909. The civil war had centered around the Azerbaijan city of Tabriz which the Russians liberated for the nationalist forces. Royalist forces supported the Shah. In July, he was deposed when nationalist forces took Tehran. Russian troops remained in Persia for two more years.¹³

The outbreak of the World War in Europe found Persia weak, defenseless and unable to enforce her own neutrality. The war in Iran is described as "... a hotbed of intrigues of Russian, British, and German diplomats and agents. In the northwest of the country Turkey and Russia maneuvered for position, and a Turkish force advanced half the distance from Baghdad to Tehran before being defeated by the Russians."¹⁴ The revolutions of March and October 1917 in Russia marked a significant change. The Bolsheviks now assumed the role of new tzars under Lenin. Following the second revolution in November, the Bolsheviks began a withdrawal of all troops. This coincided with the 'The Decree of Peace' issued by the All Russian Congress of Soviets on the same day as their assumption of power.

In terms of Soviet foreign relations the transfer of power from the Tzarists to the Bolsheviks is significant, in that it marked the withdrawal of Russia from the traditional practices of diplomacy followed by the Great Powers. The Bolsheviks called for a just and democratic peace without annexations. Instead of relying upon

¹³Wasserberg, 45. Langer, 966. and Masch 35. Each of these works discusses this period in detail although there is some minor deviation in precise dates.

¹⁴Donald N. Wilber, Iran: Past and Present, 9th ed. (Princeton NJ, Princeton University Press, 1961), 72.

treaties and the maintenance of status quo, the ideological orientation of the Marxism-Leninism was an appeal for continued revolution. Adam Ulam explains that the Decree embodied two themes: "a general appeal to all governments on behalf of peace, couched in democratic phraseology; and a revolutionary appeal, going over the heads of governments to the working masses of the warring countries, and also by implication, to the imperial possessions of the great powers"¹⁵ The Bolshevik withdrawal from the war marked the beginning of a period of consolidation under the new Soviet regime.

The Soviets considered the Near East an important factor in their policy considerations and issued statements by which they sought to co-opt the Persian government. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk contained provisions for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Persia. Further guarantees came later, by denouncing all Tzarist privileges in Persia and releasing Persia from debts. Motivation for these actions were both short and long term. It is obvious that the Soviet Union sought to gain the confidence and sympathy of the Persian government. Short term requirements called for undermining the British and French participation in the Russian civil war by winning over the Persian government. For the long term, the intention was to

¹⁵Adam B. Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence. Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1973, 2nd ed, (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, 1974), 52. Also helpful in examining the early period of Soviet Foreign Policy is George Kennan's Russia and the West Under Lenin and Stalin, (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1961).

create a buffer between the British and Soviet territories in South West Asia.¹⁶

There is another significant factor. Moscow's interest in Iran intensified because ideology was now added to the long range goals. After the communist revolution, a spirit of increasing disillusionment evolved in Moscow, which led to increasing interest in the east. "Lenin and his supporters had assumed that the socialist revolution in Moscow would encourage socialists elsewhere to revolt thereby toppling the capitalist regimes in Western Europe within a matter of months. Instead, the communists in turn were defeated, and toward the end of World War I the allies joined forces to invade Russia and intervene on behalf of the White Forces."¹⁷ Extending the revolution to the east was a way of legitimizing their ideology and of undermining the British presence in Persia.

The British sought to protect their interests in India, Afghanistan and southern Persia in several ways. First, they hoped to pressure the Soviets through the intervention in the Russian civil war. Second, through the 1919 Anglo-Persian agreement they sought to co-opt the Persians. However, the majlis refused to ratify this agreement. This effort was consistent with the British method of operating throughout the period of great power diplomacy.

¹⁶Masch, 46. and Kennan, 37-50. Kennan discusses the significance of the Allied intervention in the north where the American contingent was deployed. It is important to consider the significance of the Allied intervention in total context to the Soviets. They were challenged in the north and Archangel and Murmansk, in the south and in the far east at Vladivostok. The Allied intervention remains a significant Soviet propaganda tool.

¹⁷Wasserberg, 49.

The Persians, pragmatically, cooperated with both the Soviets and the British. British oil interests continued to be recognized as an important factor in the countries economic development, and continued through the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. Relations with the Soviets continued to be built. Following Reza Khan's seizure of power, one of the first actions was to sign a treaty of Friendship on 26 February 1926. Although this treaty formally renounced Soviet ambitions in Iran by repudiating all Tzarist rights and agreements, it left a loophole for Soviet intervention.¹⁸

In summary, this second period is noteworthy because of the fundamental change in Russia's approach to its foreign relations, not only toward Persia, but on the entire spectrum of interstate relations. This change was primarily due to the Bolshevik revolution and seizure of power. British policy consistently sought to protect its holdings in India and exploit, through the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, the natural resources in Iran. The United States, consistent with its isolationist stance in general, was not a major player. Although the U.S. did provide advice. Internal developments in Iran centered on the rise of the Pahlavi dynasty, as Reza Shah slowly consolidated power and attempted to build a nation. "One writer has described the situation in

¹⁸Kuniholm and Masch both discuss this treaty. Masch quotes Articles V and VI which state. . . "if a third party should attempt to carry out a policy of usurpation by means of armed intervention in Persia, or if such power should desire of use Persian territory as its base of operation against Russia. . .and if the Persian government should not be able to put a stop to such a menace after having been once called upon to do so by Russia, Russian troops shall have the right to advance into the Persian interior for the purpose of carrying out the military operation necessary for defense. Russia, however, shall withdraw her troops from Persian territory as soon as the danger has been removed." pp.47. This clause was latter used to justify the intervention of Soviet Forces in 1941.

Iran between 1925 and 1941 as an 'armed truce' between the powerful forces of Iranian nationalism, conservative British imperialism, and dynamic Soviet communism. Better than anyone, the Shah understood that he had to rely on third powers as counterweights against them."¹⁹ The Shah managed to successfully involve third parties. This is evidenced by the Millspough mission from the US and the expansion of economic ties with Germany. He continued attempts to consolidate his power base in the Muslim nationalities.

C. World War II: Intervention and the Rise of US Interests

The significance of this period is the increasing involvement of the United States in Iran. From an isolationist stance in the pre-World War II period, US foreign policy developed to a position where Iran, as the pivot point of South West Asian power, became a key in our strategy of containing Soviet expansionism in the Cold War. This period also marks the end of British preeminence in its former colonies. Soviet foreign policy, under Stalin's hand and in the wake of the formation of Peoples democracies in Eastern Europe, turned decisively more aggressive in obtaining and holding territory. Iran continued to be influenced and controlled by outside powers.

The first important factor which must be examined is the growth of German influence in Iran. The Shah, as stated above, was interested in controlling third power influence in his nation. One way to do this was to expand ties with other nations. Whereas the Americans were

¹⁹Kuniholm, 136.

reluctant to break their post WWI isolationist barrier, the Germans, restricted by the settlements of WWI, were eager to extend ties. Faramarz S. Fatemi details the expansion of German-Iranian economic ties before the Second World War. He explains how German companies developed into important resources for Iranian economic development from the signature of The German-Iranian treaty of friendship in 1929 to collaboration in munitions production in 1941. In the last days of the Weimar Republic, the German share of Iranian foreign trade was only 8 percent. This percentage increased quickly from 27 percent in 1936-37 to 40 percent in 1939-40. "During this same time, Soviet Iranian trade fell into a slump. The Soviet Union accounted for 35.5 percent of all Iranian Foreign trade from 1936 to 1937; by 1939-40 the Soviet share had diminished to 0.5 percent, a result of the lapsing of the commercial treaty in June 1938. . .",²⁰

As a result, the British most certainly watched these developments carefully as a threat to their interests. The Soviets on the other hand were concerned in several ways. The Soviet signature of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in 1940 was primarily motivated to secure the sovereignty of the state and buy time. Moscow's strategy as "directed at enhancing its security, spreading communism, and diminishing the influence of others in Persian affairs. . . security along its southern flank still loomed large in its relations with Iran as did to secure a warm water port in the Mediterranean and/or Persian Gulf."²¹ The Non-aggression Pact allowed for Soviet basing close to

²⁰Faramarz S. Fatemi, The USSR in Iran, (Cranbury, NJ: Barnes and Co, 1980), 16.

²¹Wasserberg, 63.

the Turkish Straits and recognized the Soviet interest in the Persian Gulf area. On 22 June 1941, Hitler invaded the Soviet Union; Stalin soon became concerned about the German presence in the south.

The joint Anglo-Soviet invasion of Iran was triggered by the Shah's failure to comply with Allied requests to deport the German specialists living in the country and working for the Trans-Iranian railway. Moscow had joined with London following the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union. Even though Iran had declared its neutrality in 1939. The Anglo-Soviet intervention was designed to end Nazi influence in Iran. Several additional factors warrant mentions as well. No doubt, the Trans-Iranian railway was also considered an important objective as a supply route. So was protecting the strategic Iranian oil fields and shoring up protection of British interests in India.²² The invasion also forced the Reza Shah to abdicate in favor of his son, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi. Terms of the invasion and occupation were agreed upon with the signature of the Tripartite Treaty of Alliance, 29 Jan 1942. Iran acknowledged the presence of foreign troops, while both Britain and the Soviet Union agreed to withdraw within 6 months of the end of hostilities.

It is the Tripartite Treaty that became the significant tool for American involvement in Iran at this stage. Iran could no longer use German involvement use as a buffer for Anglo-Soviet competition in its territory. The Iranians, keeping in mind the 1907 partition of the nation

²²A number of authors cover this period in detail. Kenneth L. Hetrick, The United Nations as a National Foreign Policy Instrument: The Iranian Case of 1946, (Ph.D. dissertation: Rutgers University, 1979), 48-50. Fatemi, 17-23. Kuniholm, 138-140. and Langer, 1309.

into three spheres of influence, were concerned with the long term possibilities of the Anglo-Soviet occupation. In concert with earlier tactics the new Shah sought American assistance to guarantee favorable terms of the Allied occupation. The United States was reluctant to become involved in the traditional balance of power struggle. The US preferred instead to support only the war cause with its lend-lease program. The United States was providing 40,000 troops, sent to work the supply route into the Soviet Union for war lend-lease items. As the siege of Stalingrad continued throughout the winter of 1942-43 international efforts to support the Soviet defense continued. No US resolution to influence the Iranian situation was made. It was not until the Tehran Conference in November, 1943 that the United States reacted. "It is obvious that the declaration (/referring to the 'Declaration of the Three Powers Regarding Iran' signed at the Tehran Conference) sprang from American initiative, that it unequivocally bound the US to safeguard Iran's independence, and that it was greeted (by the Iranian people) with great enthusiasm."²³ Therefore it was by the end of 1943 that the US had committed itself to helping Iran.

Tracing the patterns of influence of the superpowers in international relations, Rouhollah Ramazani offers a different perspective. His analysis is that "the young Shah, however, had every intention of involving the US power and influence in Iran. The war, he knew had breached the traditional US isolationism . . . between then and

²³Hetrick, 57.

the rise of Musaddeq to power in 1951, the Shah single-mindedly used every possible method to deepen the US stakes in Iran."²⁴ While this may be true from the Shah's perspective, the national interest of the United States was not strictly influenced by his efforts. In 1942, Cordell Hull, the Secretary of State, wrote in a memorandum; "American Policy is in no way motivated by considerations of self interest but solely toward the furtherance of the common foundations for satisfactory and lasting peacetime conditions in Iran, as in the rest of the world."²⁵

Perhaps it is true that in the early stages the national interest of the United States was motivated by a general concern for world order. To Roosevelt, idealistically, a strong post-war Iran was an additional hope for a lasting peace and secure world. However, with the granting of oil rights to American companies later in the war and the option for increasing the number of contracts with the British withdrawal in the post-war period, American interests developed more in the economic realm. American oil interests were not all centered in Iran. During the interwar period, American investment centered in the the Saudi kingdom. A balance of power in the region which would secure the American economic interests was seemingly important. Iran became one facet of the balance. The other facet became containing the Communist threat from the Soviet Union.

²⁴Rouhollah K. Ramazani, The United States and Iran: Patterns of Influence, (New York: Praeger, 1982), 8.

²⁵Quoted in Kuniholm, 157.

During the occupation of Iran, the Soviet Union had established a troop presence in the northern territories, specifically Azerbaijan. In retrospect, it is easy to see that with the occupation the Soviets began to establish in Azerbaijan some of the same mechanisms which were later used in the creation of the 'People's democracies' in Eastern Europe. It appears that the Moscow's aim was to eventually Sovietize the region. Measures which were later to be effectively used in ensuring Soviet control in East Europe included; the establishment of the Communist Party, establishing a joint stock company and stationing the Red Army in the region. At the close of the war in 1945, the Iranians insisted that the Soviets withdraw their troops. They also made the same demands of the British and American forces. The Americans and the British complied, but the Soviets did not. In fact, it was quite the reverse as they strengthened their troop presence. This Soviet attempt to gain control was not resolved until January 1946, when Iran finally brought the matter to the UN Security council for resolution.²⁶

By the end of the Second World War the United States was firmly committed to a position in Iran, due to both our evolving strategy of containment and because of invitations from the Shah. The Soviet Union, as in other border areas, attempted to assert control by the

²⁶Thomas Hammond, in Anatomy of a Communist Takeover, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), 1-47, 638-644. identifies several features which are typical in cases of Soviet style communist takeovers. They include: the use of the Red Army, attempts to win over the local population through building a communist party, and attempts at building a broad based coalition government or national front. As show in Alvin Z. Rubinstein, Soviet Policy toward Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan, (New York: Praeger, 1982), 62-65. The Soviets attempted to employ some of these methods in Iran to consolidate their power position.

building neutral pro-Soviet buffers. The Soviets initially accepted US presence in Iran as a matter of wartime need; the US was a key ingredient in their turn at Stalingrad with lend-lease equipment. But as the war drew to an end the United States presented a challenge to the traditional problem of offsetting third power involvement. In the ideological realm, Soviet Marxist-Leninist ideology was shifting from the theory of 'socialism in one country' to Stalin's 'two camp' theory. In the Soviet context, the 'two camp' concept meant that there was no actor who could remain neutral.²⁷ In Iran, this meant that either the country would become a member of the camp, or it would be a member of the opposition. If Iran belonged to the Capitalist camp, then it was considered an enemy posed to strike at the southern flank.

D. The Cold War

This section will examine the machinations and changes of Soviet-American-Iranian relations from the end of the Second World War until the overthrow of the Iranian monarchy. The consolidation of positions and drawing of battle lines for the cold war was a process which lasted from the end of WWII until the 'war' was in full swing by 1947. The Cold War between the Capitalist and Socialist camps, in the terminology of Marxism-Leninism, continued until detente between the superpowers in the early 1970s. This section will examine the positions and competition between Iran, the Soviet Union and the United States

²⁷Wasserberg, 72.

from the end of the Second World War until the beginning of the Islamic revolutionary period.

There are a number of trends which developed during this period. First, is the retreat of the British from South West Asia. Second, the internal changes, in Iran as the Shah grew more knowledgeable and consolidated power. Iran developed from a constitutional government back to the state of monarchy, while most other nations in the post WWII world were doing the opposite. Nationalist sentiment factionalized and eventually was destroyed as the Shah managed to disassemble the Nationalist Front Government. U.S. interests slowly surged to a peak as a new President came to the nation's helm in the post-war period and successive administrations each considered Iran an important pivot point in our strategy of containment of the communist threat. For their part, the Soviet Union initially was defeated in her attempt to takeover in Azerbaijan and remained an outcast until after Stalin's 1953 death. A period of normalization followed until 1963 and the beginning of a new era of cooperation and friendship, based primarily on economic ties.

The first event to highlight the head to head rivalry over Iran following the war, was the 1946 Azerbaijan crisis. According to the assurances of the Tripartite Treaty, the Armed Forces of the occupying nations were to depart Iran shortly after the settlement of hostilities. The Soviets refused to do so, or more properly refused to answer while waiting to consolidate socialist power in the region. The newly created United Nations, legacy of the pre-war League of

Nations, had been formed and was about to meet its first test in international diplomatic crisis mediation. Iran brought its complaint to the U.N. against Soviet presence in March 1946. Although it could be disputed that the United Nations was responsible for the Soviet Union's withdrawal from its position in Iran, it did become the forum for the mediation of this settlement. Some form of credit must be given to Iran's new premier, Ahmad Qavam, who negotiated with Stalin and in the United Nations. In February 1946 Qavam spent time in Moscow trying to deal with the Kremlin. Adam Ulam says that he was forced to listen to "Soviet intimations as to how the crisis might be resolved. . . . They no longer wanted an oil concession in northern Iran but would be satisfied with a 'joint company' of the type now being installed in their European satellites, 51 per cent of the shares being owned by the USSR and 49 by Iran."²⁸ Qavam's goal during this visit was most likely to try and placate Stalin. He did acquiesce to their demands for a joint oil company. Furthermore, he assured Moscow of the required support in the majlis to pass approval for a joint stock company. Qavam's style of diplomacy was also backed by the British and Americans bilaterally to the Soviets and in the United Nations.²⁹

Iran's tactics in the United Nations were successful and the Soviets pulled out of the northern province. Azerbaijan was returned to Iranian control on 13 June 1946. Several implications were evident in this action. For Iran, who continued to be plagued by outside

²⁸Ulam, 426.

²⁹Rubinstein, 62-65. Discussion of the effects of Stalin's "Imperialist Policies" toward Iran.

intervention in its internal affairs and by a relatively weak internal government, the success marked the support of various nationalist and tribal factions internally and the support of the US and Britain externally. The Iranian communist party, the Tudeh, as might be expected, opposed thwarting Moscow's attempts.³⁰ As one author commented,

Allied negotiations demonstrated that high-minded principles and diplomatic conferences were ineffective in deterring the Soviet's ambitions to secure their southern flank and acquire a springboard to the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. Just as historical aspirations there had resulted on Britain's many attempts to limit them, so contemporary evidence that Russia was pursuing its traditional goals had the same effect upon the United States.³¹

The US was becoming more aware of the full impact of dealing with the Soviets. The end result of this crisis also demonstrated how effective American support and aid could be in dealing against the Soviet thrust.

In Iran, the results of this confrontation became apparent in 1947. First, the Majlis voted down the Soviet joint stock oil venture. Stalin down played the crisis, preferring instead to emphasize Soviet goals on to other fronts. The Soviets were deeply involved in China and Eastern Europe. Second, the beginning of the Marshall plan and Truman Doctrine added to Soviet problems of control in the satellites. Iran was in the process of developing closer ties with the United States seeking

³⁰U.S. Congress. Joint Economic Committee. Iran's Foreign Policy: Perspectives and Projections, by Rouhollah K. Ramazani, Congressional Research Office, Joint Committee Print, A Compendium of Papers dealing with the Economic Consequences of the Revolution in Iran. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1980.

³¹Kuniholm, 212.

security and assistance. The United States continued the efforts by sending a Military mission and extending new arms sales to Iran.

It was obvious that Iran was tilting more and more toward the United States, especially after the publication of their seven year economic development plan in 1949. The Shah increasingly saw American support as a way for Iran to become powerful. However, as this tilt became more obvious, there were those in Iran who were against such moves toward foreign influences. Meanwhile, the Shah did not understand the growing resentment of the majlis. Forming the basic opposition to the Shah's plans, the National Front favored nationalization of the nation's oil resources. Among them, as leader of the coalition, was Mohammed Mossadeq who was named premier in 1951. Lawrence Ziring describes him as experienced and dedicated, but furthermore . . . "Sensitive to foreign penetration, he had made the elimination of foreign influence in the country his main preoccupation. Thus his intense desire to Iranianize the country's oil industry."³² On 30 April 1951, the majlis asked Mossadeq to take the seat of premier. He quickly and with full approval of the parliament began to nationalize the oil resources.

Nationalization of the oil resources had grave affects on the British. "The British had made the mistake of treating the oil dispute in commercial terms, believing that the demands for nationalization were staged by the Iranian negotiators in a clever move to strengthen their hand . . . For the Iranian people the conflict with the British was a

³²Ziring, 62.

national revolution against foreign exploitation and domination.”³³ In some ways this was a precursor to the fate which befell the United States years later. Alienated, extremist and strongly nationalistic forces were at work in Iran. Internal opposition to the Shah, and his policies of relying upon foreign resources, was developing into a major stumbling block. Britain brought their case to the International Court of Justice, arguing that the Iranian moves were unfair. Premier Mossadeq spent time in the United States and at the World Court stating the position of his country. Their position was that nationalization of the oil industry was an internal matter, and therefore did not fall under the jurisdiction of the world court. In July 1952 the Court ruled for the Iranians. Iran followed later by breaking diplomatic relations with Britain.

The British position at this point was tenuous. One of their options was to enlist the assistance of the United States- which they did. Under President Truman the U.S. course had been to resist strong reactions. Truman’s option was to send Averell Harriman to attempt a mediated solution. This aroused the anger of the Soviet supported communist party, the Tudeh, causing further domestic political problems in Iran.

President Eisenhower’s election heralded a new course in US Foreign policy. His ‘New Look’ strategy had several features, but his basic belief was . . . “the world balance of power (is) so delicately poised that no further victories for communism (can) be tolerated anywhere

³³Fatemi, 181.

without upsetting it . . . As Eisenhower put it . . . 'As there is no weapon so small, no arena too remote, to be ignored; there is no free nation too humble to be forgotten.'³⁴ President Eisenhower's Secretary of State was John Foster Dulles. In the Eisenhower administration, Dulles was to set the tone for foreign policy. Dulles believed that it was possible to know and understand Soviet intentions by understanding the writings of Marx, Lenin and Stalin. To Dulles, the Soviet plan was clear, orchestrated and finely tuned, the goal of which was to take over countries one by one.

Given the administrations proclivity to see the Soviet Union at work behind the Mossadeq government, it is not difficult to understand their actions in support of the British position and against the Iranian government. US ideological and world order interests deemed vital the overthrow of the Iranian constitutional government. Eisenhower moved to cut off aid to Iran until the oil dispute was settled. When this action did not work, a boycott of Iranion by the British and Americans was instituted. Iranion financial assets in London and in the United States were frozen. Rouhollah K. Ramazani writes,

As a result, Dr. Musaddiq's inability to compromise with the British; the deteriorating economic conditions of Iran; the rise of the Tudeh power; the American cold war fear of the possibility of a 'communist coup in Iran; and particularly the coming into power of Conservatives in Britain and the Republicans in Washington, the long standing British call for the overthrow of the Musadiq government began to find a more sympathetic ear in Washington. The CIA assisted the Shah and his supporters in overthrowing the Musadiq government and bringing back the Shah who had fled the country.³⁵

³⁴Gaddis, 130.

³⁵U.S. Congress. Joint Economic Committee. by Rouhollah K. Ramazani, p72.

On 22 August 1953 the Shah was restored to power by loyalists, the Military, the Police and with outside assistance from the US government. The Eisenhower administration moved to continue a \$45 million economic assistance program.

There are several lessons which can be learned from the 1953 overthrow of the Mossadeq government. First, the United States began a build up in Iran, with economic development and military assistance programs. This was considered a way of securing our containment policy. Second, domestic opposition to the Shah was shattered. The Tudeh was outlawed, its cells broken and those supporters in the military eliminated. The American CIA began a period of close association with the Shah's security force, the SAVAK. For the American Central Intelligence Agency, this alignment would later be a potential blind spot during the Islamic revolution. Perhaps most significant was the development of the Shah's personal power base, supported by the secret police, the massive military build up and, of course, the silenced vocal opposition. A number of authors have identified one more significant factor. As Lawrence Ziring writes, "In the minds of the people SAVAK symbolized the hated monarchy, as well as the role played by the United States in sustaining the Shah."³⁶ This symbolism was later to extend beyond just the SAVAK, and as Iranians associated Americans with the Pahlavi regime, the US would be considered as satan.

³⁶Ziring, 66.

Soviet interests in Iran remained consistent throughout this period. However, with the emergence of a authoritarian, pro-American Shah at the head of the Iranian government, it became increasingly difficult for the Soviets to penetrate Iran. Oddly, for some reason neither the Soviet Union nor the Tudeh, provided Mossadeq with support during the closing days of his regime.³⁷

For the remainder of the 1950s and until 1963 the Soviet goal in Iran was similar to their position with the west, one of "peaceful coexistence". Moscow made moves towards the Iranian monarchy, but Iran was tilting further and further into the western camp. In 1955, Iran became a member of the Baghdad pact and in 1959 signed a bilateral defense pact with the United States.³⁸ Throughout this period the Soviet's chief fear was that Iran would allow the United States to establish bases for nuclear weapons on Iranian soil. In turn, the United States strengthened the Shah's power and helped build his confidence. In 1955, when the Soviets criticised Iran's signature to the Baghdad pact, Iran was unmoved. Later, in 1959, Iran made it known that it no longer recognized the 1921 pact it had signed with the Soviet Union.

The Iranian policy of maintaining distance from the Soviet Union changed in 1962. According to C.D.S. Drace-Francis, a member of the British Diplomatic service in Iran from 1967-71, the assurance of the Iranian Foreign Ministry to the Soviet government in September 1962, that Iran would not serve as a potential missile base of any type, was the mechanism which served to change the course of Soviet Iranian

³⁷Fatemi, 186.

³⁸Cooper, 162.

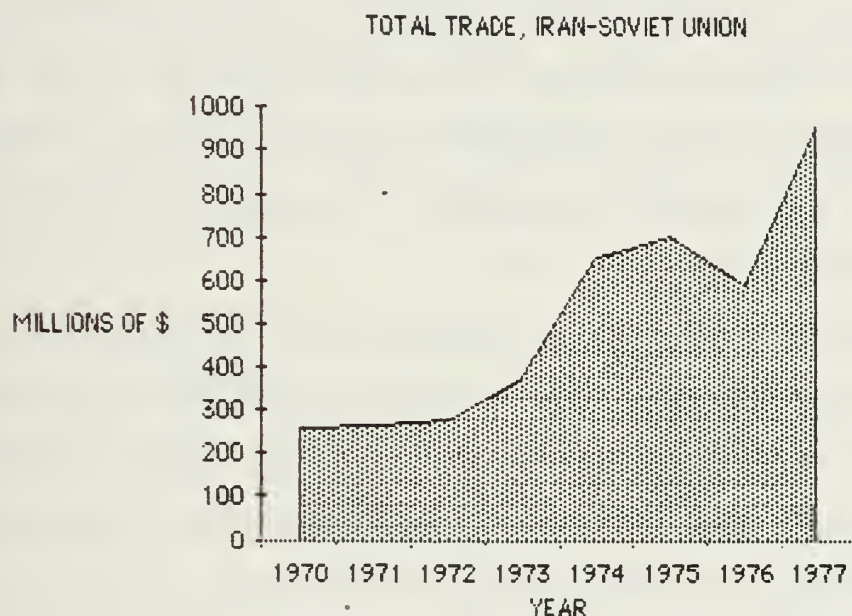
relations. It should also be noted, that at the same time as relations with the Soviet Union were improving, the Shah was taking a more independent course from the United States. The United States began to phase out economic and military aid. Irano-Soviet agreements which followed fell into three categories: "Soviet assistance for development projects in Iran; Iranian gas and oil exports to the Soviet Union; and the promotion of Irano-Soviet trade."³⁹

While there are numerous reasons for the rekindling of Soviet and Iranian relations, there are four basic categories which led to their rapprochement. First, the Soviet Union had broken with China. This was a major event. Given traditional Russian fears of encirclement, Soviet strategy was to seek ties with Iran to offset possible challenges from China. Second, the Shah had been strengthened by his relationship with the U.S. Like his father, he was concerned about becoming too closely linked with any outside party. Given the spirit of peaceful coexistence and followed by the new period of detente, the Shah had the opportunity to seek a separate course from the U.S. Third, the Shah set upon a course of rapid internal modernization that required industrial support. The Soviets, always looking for sources of hard currency and consistent with the Soviet development model, were willing to provide this support. Fourth, the Soviets needed an additional source of energy. Iran, with massive natural gas reserves, was able to provide this support. Natural gas from Iran and Afghanistan was used in the Soviet republics of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. To the

³⁹C.D.S. Drace-Francis, "Irano-Soviet Economic Relations 1962-1983", Asian Affairs: Journal of the Royal Society for Asian Affairs XVI (February 1985): 54.

Soviets, it became cheaper to import this energy than to pipe it in from their own sources in Siberia.⁴⁰

The chart below illustrates the growth of trade between the Soviet Union and Iran during the period 1970 to 1977.⁴¹



As the Soviet Union managed to improve its ties with Iran, so too did some of the Eastern bloc nations, notably Czechoslovakia. Eastern European goals also concerned the Iranian natural gas reserves. When it became impossible in the late 1950s and early 1960s to attempt to further political measures the Soviets turned to economic cooperation. Economic cooperation was beneficial to both the Soviet Union and to Iran. The Soviets may have been trying to lure Iran away from the United States. However, the Shah preferred to stay in the

⁴⁰Cooper, 163.

⁴¹National Foreign Assessment Center. Communist Aid to the Less-Developed Countries. 1977. Central Intelligence Agency. Washington D.C. November 1978, 8-10. as quoted in Cooper, 165.

western camp at least for the time being. Drace-Francis calls this rapid development of economic ties a paradox, given the Shah's avowedly pro-Western stance. It came about partly because he was dissatisfied with American aid performance under President Kennedy (who was demanding internal reform as a price for continued US help). The Shah also wanted to assert his independence at a time of increasing detente, and demonstrate that he was as clever as other third world leaders in playing off the superpowers against one another for his country's benefit.

Alvin Rubinstein points out that Soviet-Iranian relations reached their apex between 1968 and 1978. This was especially true in the economic sphere. While politically the course of Irano-Soviet relations improved slowly but steadily, economic agreements brought both sides profits at a faster pace. The only exception to this amenable course of economic relations was an incident over natural gas in 1974-75. Politically, relations were both peaceful and antagonistic. But considering the long 1,200 mile border between the nations, relations continued relatively safe and peaceful. The main destabilizing aspect dealt with the Soviet arms build up in Iraq and Soviet designs towards Afghanistan. The Soviets were dismayed with Iran's massive US supplied arms build up, their strategy towards becoming the policeman of the Persian Gulf, and granting permission to the US for intelligence gathering sites on Iranian territory. It is Rubinstein's thesis that

Despite different systems and antithetical ideologies, they (Iran and the USSR) developed valued economic relations, kept their border quiet, and handled their regional rivalry pragmatically and prudently. Each derived benefit from the

normalized relationship, and Moscow must have watched the fall of the Shah with mingled uneasiness and expectancy.⁴²

U.S. strategy for coping with the Soviet threat moved from containment to detente through the 1960s and into the 1970s. The U.S. continued to build its relationship with Iran, slowly becoming closely identified with the Shah's regime. When the United States and Iran signed the 1959 bilateral agreement it was agreed that . . . "the Government of the United States of America regards as vital to its national interest and to world peace the preservation and integrity of Iran."⁴³ From this point on the relationship between the United States and Iran became increasingly complicated in a web of intertwined and difficult issues. As the Shah gained and consolidated his personal power, he also was able to exert more pressure on the United States. The national interest on the United States is the product of a complex series of decisions made in a pluralistic democratic political process. In contrast to Iran, under the hand of the autocratic Shah, and to the oligarchy of the Soviet Union, the national interest of the U.S. in the period preceding the revolution was a product of several factors. American strategy towards the Soviets and the Persian Gulf was complicated by (1) The strategic importance of Persian Gulf oil to the United States and its allies. (2) Our increasingly complex interest in arms transfers to Iran as she became the foundation of U.S. Persian

⁴²Rubinstein, 73-96.

⁴³U.S. Congress. Joint Economic Committee. "The United States and Iran: An Overview", by Bernard Reich. Congressional Research Office, Joint Committee Print, A Compendium of Papers dealing with the Economic Consequences of the Revolution in Iran. Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1980, 6.

Gulf security. (3) The issue of economic aid and economic reform in Iran. (4) The domestic political process of the United States considering the effects of Administration changes and the Vietnam War on American policy.

It is beyond the scope of the discussion to examine, in detail, each of the above factors. However, it is important to examine the subtle changes in the national interests of the United States as defined by subsequent Presidential administrations. While the Eisenhower administration deemed the relationship of Iran and the United States as 'vital' in 1959, our relationship was never so vital that it would have involved escalating to the resolute use of military force.⁴⁴ The Kennedy administration did more to define the interests of the United States in terms of self determination individual states. Shortly before his death, President Kennedy said, "The interest of the United States of America. . . is best served by preserving and protecting a world of diversity in which no one power or one combination of powers can threaten the security of the United States." In other words, by this definition the job of American foreign policy was to provide for a balance of power in the world. Nationalism, "so long as it reflected the

⁴⁴Ramazani in The United States and Iran: The Patterns of Influence . argues that the United States was reluctant to enter into any military alliances which would have aggravated the cold war or antagonized its relationship with Israel. Instead of treaties the U.S. signed executive agreements with Iran, Pakistan and Turkey. Ramazani argues that this agreement "did not mean any automatic U.S. defense of Iran. Iran's disappointment was only slightly tempered by the U.S. pledge to continue economic and military assistance. It resented the strings attached to U.S. aid-Washington called for effective 'economic development' by the Shah's regime." (p 39) This clearly agrees with Nuechterlein's explanation of how a state should seek to maximize its ideological interests by spreading its system of values to other states. It was also in the security interest of the U.S. to seek these agreements because it lessened the threat to the nation by avoiding the escalation.

principle of self determination, posed no threat to American institutions. . .".⁴⁵ The Kennedy administration, and the Johnson administration which followed it, adopted the strategy of 'Flexible Response', meeting force with equal force. This strategy was to receive its first test in Vietnam.

Economic aid to Iran was slowly phased down. The phase out did not effect the Iranians to a great extent, due to their increasing economic stability. In 1960, Iran joined an oil consortium, OPEC, in an attempt to control the price of oil. The Shah began to consolidate his power base, economically and politically. Domestic political opposition was oppressed. SAVAK was used as the principle tool to repress opposition. Opposition continued with the activity of religious forces opposed to the Shah's internal reforms. In 1963, Ayatollah Khomeini, allied with nationalist forces, opposed the central government. Increasingly, the opposition felt that the Shah was bowing to American pressures. In 1964, Khomeini was sent into exile. When the U.S. asked for and received a Status of Forces agreement in 1964, it was cited as further evidence of foreign control and strongly opposed by nationalist and religious forces.⁴⁶

By 1967, the Shah's 'White revolution' was in full swing. He had managed to almost completely drive out the opposition. Politically and economically the country was seen as a successful example of third world development in the United States. The Shah felt himself in total control. U.S. economic aid was brought to a halt. Due to Iran's success

⁴⁵Gaddis, 201.

⁴⁶Ramazani, Influence, 39.

and U.S. involvement in the Vietnam war, the administration felt that priorities were elsewhere. President Nixon was elected in 1968, and with his administration the course of Iranian-American relations was to change.

In July 1969, at a press conference on Guam, Nixon announced what was to become a key element of the Nixon-Kissinger strategy. "The Kennedy and Johnson administrations had erred by making Vietnam a symbol of American power and commitment throughout the world. The Nixon administration, taking advantage of its more ecumenical definition of power, would seek to reduce Vietnam to its proper perspective. . . and concentrate on global commitments."⁴⁷ The national interest of the United States previously had been 'universalism', it now became important to move away from committing American troops to do battle in specific regional disputes. Evidenced by public opinion in America as expressed on college campuses across the nation, it seemed important to the Nixon Administration to remove America from spheres of conflict. Vietnam was the most obvious sphere.

The Nixon doctrine held that America should undertake fewer direct commitments. We would maintain our treaty obligations and the nuclear umbrella over the free world. At lower levels of conflict, America would seek to assist economically and as required by our treaties, but the subject nation would have to become directly involved in self-development and self-defense.

⁴⁷Gaddis, 277.

In Vietnam this meant a policy of Vietnamization and gradual withdrawal of American troops. In Tehran, this indicated that based on the country's tremendous advances, Nixon now considered Iran to be the strongest and most advanced nation in the region. Iran and Saudi Arabia were seen as the pillars of strength in the Gulf. According to Henry Kissinger, "There was no possibility of assigning any American forces to the Indian Ocean in the midst of the Vietnam War and its attendant trauma. Congress would have tolerated no such commitment; the public would not have supported it. Fortunately, Iran was willing to play this role."⁴⁸ Iran became the shield for U.S. and western oil interests in the Gulf. The western world was willing to pay for this shield in oil price hikes. Subsequently, and in agreement with the new doctrine, the U.S. ended military aid; Iran was now fully capable of paying for its arms purchases.

Iran, however, wondered if the United States would be willing to stand up to its treaty commitments, especially following the 1965 and 1971 wars between India and Pakistan. The United States in the South

⁴⁸Henry A. Kissinger, White House Years, (Boston: Little Brown, 1979), 1263.

West Asian perspective had failed to support Pakistan.⁴⁹ The Shah sought to avoid this problem through a policy of building up his own military forces. President Nixon did not object and upon visiting Tehran in 1972, agreed to further massive military sales to Iran. These arrangements included the latest in American weapons technology, with technical and military advisors to accompany the new systems. Following the Shah's nationalization of oil resources in 1973 and subsequent raise in the oil prices, the U.S. continued willingly to provide weapons systems as a price for regional security. Between 1972 and 1975 Iran ordered \$10 billion in military sales from the United States. Ramazani describes the U.S. position as,

... But the point is that the Shah's well-known insatiable appetite for arms was whetted by the behavior of the Nixon Administration, not to mention the pressures of several private arms contractors. The secretary of state kept justifying U.S. arms

⁴⁹The question of U.S. reliability and the durability of U.S. assistance in times of trouble still remains in the minds of some Pakistanis. Recently the question arose following the cancellation of sales of anti-aircraft missiles to Saudi Arabia and Jordan, members of the Islamic Conference Organization. An editorial in a Lahore newspaper commented on open prejudice directed against Pakistan by the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee related to Pakistan's nuclear program and human rights concerns. The article charges that a campaign sponsored by Zionist lobby members was directed at annulling the aid program approval by the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee in 1981. (Foreign Broadcast Information Service: South Asia (11 April 1984): F1.)

Islamabad's fears about U.S. credibility began in the 1960s prior to the U-2 incident and were exacerbated during the Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971. The Rann of Kutch incident and the following war in the Kashmir between Pakistan and India left Washington out in the cold. Both warring parties felt abandoned by the deliberately planned three week limit of U.S. supplies. It is quite possible that the 1965 war was a boon for Soviet presence in South Asia. The Soviets played the peacemakers by inviting Pakistan and India to the Tashkent Conference. This became the Soviet Union's first major diplomatic initiative toward South Asia as a whole and proved remarkably successful. The US had only played the role as arms supplier to both sides and was not visible in settling the peace or resolving the resultant problems. The Soviet Union helped solve problems while America was "too busy worrying about South Vietnam and the Congo" (Stanley Wolpert, Roots of Confrontation in South Asia, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1982), 147.

Again, in the 1971 war, both sides blamed Washington for "impotently refusing to take action to avert war in South Asia" Islamabad, in reference to the 1959 US-Pak executive agreement, scorned the US for not acting more forcefully. According to Wolpert, "...the USS Enterprise arrived too late, after all, and then did nothing but steam about within range of India's eastern coastline, never launching a single nuclear missile or war plane." (Wolpert, 155.)

sales primarily in broad strategic terms without regard to their adverse economic, social, psychological and political effects. . . In spite of his well known fondness for linkages, Kissinger refused to link the U.S. arms sales to oil prices in a way that would discourage the Shah's hard line oil pricing policy. . .⁵⁰

US policy towards the Soviet Union beginning with the Nixon administration and continuing to the Ford and Carter Administrations was detente. In relations with Iran, policy remained virtually unchanged. Iran became an increasingly important pillar in the US strategy. Following the closure of Turkey to CIA intelligence gathering sites in 1974, Iranian sites became of increased importance. Similarly, increased Iranian orders for weapons systems meant U.S. jobs and economic cooperation. U.S. industrialists took increasingly attentive looks at Iran. In 1975 Iran placed another \$10 billion worth of orders for American military equipment.

Ledeen and Lewis characterize the American policies as an attempt to fill the strategic void left by the British withdrawal east of the Suez canal in 1968. They analyze the situation as a two way street.

Iran became the recipient of unprecedented amounts of American material as well as a parallel transfer of American businessmen, families, and plants. From the American standpoint, the goal was to make Iran the military bulwark of the region, guaranteeing stability and ensuring that American interests would be protected. For the Shah, the special relationship would increase the stability of his regime, add an extra dimension of grandeur to his position, and give him the opportunity to play a major role. . . even in influencing the United States. . . For every dollar the United States spent on Iranian oil, the Iranians turned around and spent two in the United States on military material and other goods. And the increase in Iran's level of spending in the United States became particularly dramatic following the Nixon-Kissinger visit to Tehran in May 1972. . . and the next year's leap in oil prices."⁵¹

⁵⁰Ramazani, Influences, 48.

⁵¹Michael A. Ledeen and William H. Lewis, "Carter and the Fall of the Shah: The Inside Story", The Washington Quarterly, (Spring 1980), 8.

At the apex of the Iranian-American relationship in 1978 and before the revolution a number of trends can be discerned as to the importance of the association. Iran, as a strong military force in the region, aided American regional influence. A strong Iran also was seen to limit Soviet influence. Whether the fall of the Iranian monarchy led to reduced risk for the Soviets and increased confidence of their success in Afghanistan remains to be seen. Iranian spending in the U.S. was certainly welcomed by the government and private industry. Given the pronouncements of the Nixon and Carter administrations it became almost impossible to limit arms transfers to Iran. This leads to the conclusion that the Shah almost had a 'blank check' when it came to spending in the United States. The Carter administration, differing from the policies of the Nixon and Ford administrations, attempted to link U.S. connections to human rights concerns. This policy tended to aggravate the Iranian perception of the United States. The Iranian opposition began to make comparisons with earlier periods of outside interference a close analogy with the developing situation. The pronounced American presence in Iran caused a series of internal social and economic problems. This led to a decided anti-American attitude there. Finally, an almost fatalistic mental attitude developed among U.S. policy makers, which read that it was impossible to deny Iran anything.⁵²

In Iran, factually opposed to the perception of the relationship as seen in the U.S., several groups opposed the Shah. Their position was

⁵²Ledeen and Lewis discuss these issues at length in the above article and in their book Debacle: The American Failure in Iran, (New York: Knopf, 1981).

bolstered by increased emphasis on the Shah-American relationship. A coalition of the communist party (the Tudeh), the National Front, and religious fundamentalists, encouraged by Khomeini, formed. Unfortunately for American geopolitical policies, U.S. remained oblivious to these developments. In 1977, the Shah visited the United States. President Carter "reaffirmed United States support for a strong Iran and pledged continued aid for Iran's economic and social progress and programs to help meet Iran's security requirements." In January 1978, President Carter returned the visit, stopping in Tehran. At that time Carter described the Shah's leadership as great and Iran as "...an island of stability in one of the more troubled areas of the world."⁵³ The revolution began in earnest shortly afterwards.

E. Revolution

A brief review of the chronology of the Iranian revolution reveals a period of increasing violence and virtual civil war throughout the country until the Shah's departure in January 1979. Both the Shah and the United States were to suffer some form of myopia in forecasting the growing opposition to the Pahlavi regime. The symptoms of growing dissent had long been present. Yet, the Shah refused to recognize his loss of legitimacy. The effects of the Islamic revolution and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's ascent to power marked a major change in Iran, in Iran's foreign policies, in the regional balance and in the relations of the superpowers in South West Asia. The effects of the revolution

⁵³Reich, 8.

extended into all spheres; political, economic and military. The traditional monarchical power structure eroded and was destroyed. Rather than the traditional bi-polar power relationship in the region there now was clearly a tri-polar relationship. Iran, under the Islamic councils, established itself in opposition to both the United States and the Soviet Union. Both the U.S. and U.S.S.R. had lost their influence in the nation by the conclusion of the crisis. However, given the intensity of U.S. support for the Shah and considering the measures of Carters human rights program, which according to the Iranians did little to bring about any actual change in Iran, it appears that the United States came out on the short end of the stick.

Lawrence Ziring describes the Shah's opposition as,

"The universality of hatred for the Shah was mirrored in the disparate, ideologically diverse groups that coalesced to destroy him. Shiite religious leaders, tribal minorities, bureaucrats, bazaar merchants, students, professionals, and intellectuals; communists and liberals; laborers and peasants, sophisticated urbanites and conservative agrarians were melded into a united front dedicated to the single objective of liquidating the monarchy and its trappings."⁵⁴

The signs of the crisis had been visible for quite some time. Evidenced by a series of factors. These included; 1) demographic dislocation, 2) a lack of adequate social services, 3) the growth of a hostile middle class, 4) the growing vacillation of the Shah, as he consistently changed his mind about religious freedoms and economic programs, 5) concentration of strength in the hands of religious leaders, beginning in 1976 with pro-Islamic demonstrations, 6) the hostility of the bazaaris, traditional merchant class; and 7) the

⁵⁴Ziring, Political chronology, 167.

noticeable capital flight as liquid assets of the upper and middle classes were invested outside the country.⁵⁵

An analysis of the effects of this revolution must consider the three dominant perspectives involved. Iran, in the hands of Khomeini's religious fundamentalists, the Soviet Union and the United States are the principle actors to be considered. For Iran, the most significant cohesive figure in the post-Shah situation is the Ayatollah Khomeini. Khomeini is the symbolic center of the revolution. Numerous authors have speculated upon what the future of Iran will hold once Khomeini is dead. Ideologically, one of the most powerful influences is the Shi'i interpretation of the contemporary world. Khomeini, as well as other Shi'a leaders use this religious belief to base their actions in consolidating and controlling the masses in Iran.⁵⁶ Khomeini holds that both the United States and the Soviet Union are evil. Therefore, the Foreign Policy of Iran is now both anti-Soviet and anti-American. Obviously, we must ask how pragmatic it is for Iran to oppose the Soviet Union given their 1200 mile common border and the example set by the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

Iran holds that it does not need the United States or the Soviet Union. Economically, Iran does not need to trade with Soviet Union to survive. The likelihood of Soviet economic penetration in Iran is low

⁵⁵These factors are discussed at length in Ledeen and Lewis.

⁵⁶Thomas H. Greene in Comparative Revolutionary Movements: Search for Theory and Justice, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1984), 80. describes ideology as one factor which provides the legitimacy and continuity necessary for a revolution to succeed. Rouhollah K. Ramazani, in "Iran's Foreign Policy: Perspectives and Projections", from which this material was taken further explains how Shi'i Muslim interpretations of the Koran are used by Khomeini and his followers.

given their needs and current trading patterns. Iran can go around the United States in trading equally as well. Today, Japan and West Germany are Iran's biggest trading partners. "More than 70% of Iran's total imports in 1983-84 came from Canada, Japan, and Western Europe, and more than 50% of its total exports went to these same areas. By comparison, in the same year only 10 per cent of Iran's imports came from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and 26 per cent of its exports went to the Soviet bloc."⁵⁷ Politically, Iran has sought to expand its ties in the third world as well as with Western Europe and Japan. Militaristically, Iran acquires weapons and ammunition on the world market, independent of either the United States or Soviet Union.

Drace-Francis sees the Irano-Soviet economic relationship as having come full circle since the revolution. The rapid development seen in the last years of the Shah's regime has ended. Soviets experts still work in some Soviet installed facilities; the Isfah steel mill, the Ahwaz and Isfahan power stations and grain silos. But the growth trend has stopped.⁵⁸ An additional factor in the Irano-Soviet relationship is the treatment of the Tudeh. Despite the Tudeh support given while the revolution was in full swing, the fundamentalist religious regime has repressed Tudeh's activities. This has caused Soviet concern and earned Iran, Soviet criticism.

The Iran-Iraq war is another factor which must be considered. In the short term this war helped build Islamic fervor in Iran. But the costs

⁵⁷R.K. Ramazani, "Iran: Burying the Hatchet", *Foreign Policy* 60 (Fall 1985), 63.

⁵⁸Drace-Francis, 63.

of the war are becoming obvious. Long term these costs are taking effect, greatly exceeding the short term benefits. This war is also cause for Soviet concern. The Soviet main goal is to prevent further U.S. influence in the region. A long drawn out conflict provides further opportunity for American diplomatic initiatives to bring the conflict to an end. If this were to occur, then there would be the potential for American political influence if the region to regenerate.

The Soviet position towards post-revolutionary Iran has both gained and lost. It is a matter of deciding whether the Soviet Union has come out ahead or behind. Initially following the revolution, Moscow was one of the first nations to formally recognize Khomeini's regime. The Soviets welcomed Khomeini and sought to establish economic and foreign policy ties with the new government. From about the midway point in the revolution the Soviets had determined that their own interests would be best served if they supported the revolutionary position. The Soviets "used every opportunity to emphasize anything which would enhance the USSR's image while simultaneously reinforcing the linkage between the Iranian monarchy and the United States in an attempt to tarnish both Washington and the Shah, Conversely, anything which would damage Moscow's image or enhance that of the Shah or Washington was ignored or quickly dismissed."⁵⁹

⁵⁹Howard M. Hensel, "Moscow's Perspective on the fall of the Iranian Monarchy", Asian Affairs: Journal of the Royal Society for Asian Affairs, XIV (October 1983), 307. In this article Professor Hensel discusses the changing attitudes of the Soviets based upon their press and propaganda releases during the revolution. He concludes a distinct change from a hands off strategy to one of support for the Islamic revolutionaries. In part I of this article in the June 1983 issue of Asian Affairs he states, "...by late autumn, Moscow seems to have concluded that the unrest in Iran was more than a passing phenomenon and consequently decided to capitalize upon it in a manner involving little risk to the USSR." page 157.

Additionally, the Soviets were quick to warn the United States not to interfere. The Soviet position toward the Iran-Iraq war, though seemingly ambivalent initially, turned less indulgent following the commencement of hostilities.

The Soviet Union lost in several areas. As pointed out above, economically their penetration was severely constricted. Diplomatic relations were strained as well. The traditional instrument of Soviet political penetration, the communist party, was initially part of, but subsequently cast out of the revolutionary movement. An additional vital issue was the threat to the legitimacy of Marxist-Leninist ideology in the Soviet Central Asian republics, which are predominantly Muslim. Soviet losses must be balanced against their overall gains. If one accepts the thesis that the primary Soviet goal in this region is to offset the strength of American influence, then the revolution was a definite gain. In terms of Marxist-Leninist ideology a loss for the capitalist side is a gain for the socialist side, this generally strengthens the 'correlation of forces' on the global scale so that theoretically the socialist side comes out ahead. Certainly, at a minimum, it can be concluded that the revolution could be constructed as a boon for Soviet international propaganda plays.

Analysts have concluded several Soviet goals in the Persian Gulf and in relation to the Iranian revolutionary situation. The main Soviet concern is blocking American gains. This overshadows the import role of the revolution in undermining ideological legitimacy in Central Asia, it is the Soviet perception that a strong American presence is designed

to neutralize Soviet presence in South West Asia and the middle east. The collapse of the pro-American Iranian monarchy thus limited the U.S. position. The loss of American influence is also suggested as the elimination of a potential risk for Soviet intervention in another potentially sensitive area, Afghanistan.

Potential Soviet future objectives can therefore be determined to be, 1) To control the future Iranian relationship with the U.S., through support of anti-American themes in the Iran's foreign relations. This would be similar to Soviet actions following the crises in the Gilan Republic in 1920-21, the Azerbaijan crisis in 1946-47, the Kurdish rebellion and supporting the Baluch question in Pakistan. 2) To control the Shi'a factor in Iran, in order to maintain legitimacy in the Central Asian republics. This becomes a very difficult question considering the nature of the Islamic religion. Although Shi'a factions exist in the Central Asian Republics, they are in the minority. 3) Control of the energy question, while Iran is a potentially good source of energy import, given the numerous problems in Soviet domestic control, it is difficult to see how they could effectively control Iranian resources. However, Soviet influence in the Iranian oil question could have far reaching impact on the world oil market.⁶⁰

The bottom line is that the American loss became a Soviet gain. Even considering the erosion of the Soviet position following the

⁶⁰Francis Fukuyama, "The Soviet Threat to the Persian Gulf", Rand Corporation , P-6596 A Paper prepared for the Security Conference on Asia and the Pacific, March 1981. ; Fred Halliday, "The Middle East, Afghanistan and The Gulf in Soviet Perception", RUSI: Journal of the Royal Services Institute for Defense Studies , 129:4 (December, 1984), 13- 18; and Lawrence Ziring, "Political Dilemmas and Instability in South and Southwest Asia", Asian Affairs: An American Journal , 14 (Spring 1983), 37- 47.

December 1979 Afghanistan invasion which temporarily offset their position vis a vis Iran, the Soviet position remains firm. Furthermore, the American position in the Gulf, following the Iraqi attack on Iran in 1980, the deployment of a naval task force to the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, the build up of CENTCOM and the ROF, and prepositioning equipment on Diego Garcia, is perceived to be an instrument aimed against the Soviet Union, rather than to help the cause of peace in the region. The Soviets want to be perceived as the peacemakers and will undertake any strategy to see that this occurs, especially considering their international image following Afghanistan.⁶¹

From the American perspective, the traumatic changes brought by the revolution had numerous consequences. Politically, the U. S. suffered a loss of influence in what was conceived to be a pillar of our strategic plan in South West Asia and the Gulf. This loss of influence, obvious in Iran, also extended to other relationships. Several authors hasten to point out that our failure to forcefully support the Shah may have influenced the perception of American credibility in other regions, Saudi Arabia and again in Pakistan.⁶² In U.S. domestic politics, the collapse of US influence could be seen as decisions occasionally were muddled by confusion in the US legislative process. For example, bitter controversy erupted over the sale of the F-14 and advanced technology items. Militaristically, the loss of sensitive equipment and information is overshadowed by our loss of strategic position on the Soviet southern frontier. The subsequent pronouncement of the

⁶¹Halliday, 18.

⁶²Halliday, 18 and Reich 20.

Carter Doctrine, following the Afghanistan invasion, and reactive formation of CENTCOM were limited attempts to hold our ground. The formation of CENTCOM raises the question of a credible conventional deterrent to slow Soviet forceful expansion, while assuming that the Soviets would actively seek to take terrain in Iran.⁶³ While designed and advertised to halt Soviet aggression, the RDF realistically can only work against regional threats.

Economically, the major impact was the limit placed on the world oil supply. Iran suddenly stopped exporting oil. This not only affected the United States but put severe constraints upon our European allies. The U.S. also suddenly lost a major importer of arms, linked with a major market of capital goods and services. In late 1977 the U.S. Department of Commerce described business opportunities in Iran in these terms: "Iran's rapid economic growth has established a business climate characterized by expansion and keen competition, which should continue for several years to come. United States suppliers hold a leading position in the Iranian market. . . and excellent opportunities continue for sales of U.S. capital goods and services to Iran."⁶⁴ This loss of market resources eventually affected a growing American global trade deficit.

Ideologically, there are several facets which can be discerned. American observers in Washington and Tehran were taken totally by

⁶³Joshua M. Epstein, "Soviet Vulnerabilities in Iran and the RDF Deterrent", International Security, 6:2 (Fall 1981), 126-158. ; and Lieutenant General Robert C. Kingston, "From RDF to CENTCOM: New Challenges?", RUSI: Journal of the Royal Services Institute for Defense Studies, 129:1 (March 1984), 14-17. Both authors discuss and outline the American plan for meeting and fighting the Soviets in Iran to defend the oil interests of the Persian Gulf.

⁶⁴Reich, 10.

surprise. They had failed to understand the Shi'ite community's ability to organize and manage crisis situation. The Administration had the tendency to over-estimate the ability of SAVAK to control Iranian dissent. Our allies, most notably Egypt and Israel, did not suffer from this same myopia. Israel had warned the Iranian Jewish community far in advance of what to expect, and to leave the country.⁶⁵ However, it could also be argued that the collapse of the monarchy and the subsequent hostage crisis was good for America. The hostage crisis, as religiously reported nightly by the major television networks, served to coalesce American public opinion. The United States, torn by the war in Vietnam and ravaged by the Watergate crisis now had a rally point. From songs on the popular radio stations to bumper stickers on pick-up trucks, the Iranian crisis served as a focus for American passion. It was anti-Iran, anti-Khomeini and anti-Muslim fundamentalist, and while the ethical question remains, there was no doubt that it served to bring America together.

In conclusion, despite the ravages of the revolution and the loss of American influence, there are several constants which remain. First is the strategic position of Iran. It remains a key element in the northern tier equation. Second, Soviet goals will continue to be interpreted in the terminology of Marx and Lenin as interpreted by the current leadership. Soviet resolve will not change, although the time table for actions may be affected by outside actors. Third, U.S. commitment to basic goals of peace, stability and maintenance of the status quo

⁶⁵Ledeer and Lewis, 13.

remain the same, although potentially interpreted differently by subsequent Presidential administrations. We also will seek to maximize our gains economically and ideologically. And finally, at some time in the future, Iran will need to expand its outside relationships. Iran cannot always remain an island. With these factors in mind it is possible to make a comparison of Soviet and US interests in this critical region.

IV. Iran; A Focused Comparison of Interests

Adapting the Nuechterlein method as illustrated in Chapter II and considering the development of interests as seen in Chapter III, a comparison of Soviet and U.S. national interests in present day Iran might best be described using the diagram below. It is necessary to keep in mind the operational definition of each variable, in order not to confuse the meaning and differences between concepts.

Iran				
USSR vs.US				
<u>Basic Interest at Stake</u>		<u>Intensity of Interest</u>		
	<u>Survival</u>	<u>Vital</u>	<u>Major</u>	<u>Peripheral</u>
Defense of Homeland	USSR			US
Economic Well Being		US	USSR	
Favorable World Order		USSR	US	
Ideological	USSR		US	
Islam		USSR		US

A. Defense of homeland

American position;

The operational definition of Defense of Homeland excludes alliance relationships. Since Iran is not contiguous to the terrain of the United States, it is difficult to understand how US interest could be more intense than peripheral. Iran is not vital to the defense of U.S. territory, rather it is a component of our global strategy of containment. During the era of detente the significance of Iran as an

element in American containment policy was overshadowed by our willingness to establish a 'good guy' dialog with the Soviet Union. This variable accounts for the protection of a nation's citizens in the international realm. In this sense, state sponsored terrorism is an important consideration. The threat of terrorism goes beyond the pure interests of protecting the territory of the state.

Given today's international climate, both in terms of our relationship with the Soviet Union and in terms of the growing threat of state sponsored terrorism it may be to our benefit to re-establish ties with Iran. Doing so would first, re-establish the northern tier as an element in US strategy and by building a friendly relationship with Iran, potentially offset Iranian support of state terrorism. Following the loss of Iran as a one foundation of US National Security strategy the immediate reaction of the Carter Administration and fully supported by the Reagan administration was to immediately design, build and put into operation CENTCOM. As indicated above, the utility of this force is in supplementing local defense efforts against regional threats.

Soviet position;

It is obvious that security of her homeland has been and continues to be a survival intensity interest for the Soviet Union. Defense of the homeland and preoccupation with self protection was a key element of traditional Russian political culture. Despite the Soviet appeal to a higher order and continued references to 'fraternal and peaceful relations', the intensity of this variable for the Soviets will remain a survival issue. This is because of Iran's geostrategic position.

The Soviets gained in terms of the global correlation of forces by the American loss of influence in Iran. Some authors hypothesize that the US move out of Iran reduced the risk of intervention and spurring the Soviets to invade Afghanistan. The gain in terms of the correlation of forces was at a minimum, temporary, and the Soviets will continue to seek to keep U.S. penetration in Iran limited. Currently analysts say that the Soviet Union's goals are multi-natured. The question thus becomes which, if any goal, takes priority. The Soviets want success in all facets. Therefore, preoccupation with defense can be considered co-equal with expansionist goals.

B. Economic Well being

American position:

As illustrated above, the United States has a vital interest in economic relations, both in Iran and in the region. According to the framework of this paper, an actor will seek to maximize his economic conditions. Safe guarding the Persian Gulf, is vital not only to our own economic interests but to the interests of our allies. US allies depend on the resources from this region. United States economic performance is "inextricably intertwined with adequate and dependable supplies of reasonably priced energy."¹ An additional consideration, concerns securing the claims of US citizens in Iran. However, these proceedings are not sufficient alone to consider US interest as vital. This variable is considered vital to the US mainly due to the value of the

¹U.S. Congress. Senate, Committee of Energy and Natural Resources. Hearing on the Current State of the World Oil Market. Sen Hrg 98-752. 98th Congress, 2nd Session, 30 January, 1984, 3.

region's resources, the links of its importance to our allies and the potential to maximize gain. Risk factors are minimized considering the support of our allies and the U.N.

Soviet position:

The Soviet Union's stake economically in Iran is not strong enough to be characterized as vital. While the Soviet Union does trade with Iran, these interests are light compared to the costs which might be expected from an overt attempt to penetrate Iran. Essentially, the Soviet Union's economic interests have not substantially increased from before the revolution. Iranian natural resources would still make a good additional support base, but at the present the Soviet economy is not prepared to handle any additional challenges. It is also possible that the economic ties between the Iranian economy and the economies of Eastern European nations could challenge the Eastern European/Soviet economic relationship in the energy field. If this were the case, then the Soviets would be interested in down playing the relationship.

C. Favorable World Order

American position:

For the United States maintaining safety, security and order in the Persian Gulf is a major interest. However the intensity of this variable is not strong enough to be described as vital. According to the framework of this analysis, while the United States may deem this to be an important area it is not critical to the interests of the nation to take strong measures to counter adverse action. The Carter Doctrine proclaimed the Persian Gulf a vital area, but this was following the loss

of Iran. Safeguarding the world from the throws of Iranian backed and trained terrorists remains a major interest of the United States, but not so strong that, given the costs of intervention, we would consider a major action. Similarly, the continuing Iran-Iraq war destabilizes and undermines security in the region and it is a major interest to the nation to seek to calm the pressures, yet not so strong that very serious harm would come unless action were taken.

Soviet position:

World Order- in the Soviet sense-difficult to define. Given Marxist-Leninist ideology, world order does not convey the same meaning as to the United States. Since the ideology is essentially in favor of destabilizing the status quo, then world order to the Soviets would seem to indicate a goal of gaining power for themselves or advancing the position of socialism. In this regard, any threat to world order, in the Soviet meaning and as conditioned by their ideological view, would be of vital intensity. The Soviets like to consider themselves and be considered by others as world peacemakers. It is in their interest to show themselves in favor of developing peaceful relations and distancing themselves from local destabilizing actions, except where they can gain an advantage. The Iran-Iraq war and the Fundamentalist Revolution in Iran can be advertised as reactions to imperialist, capitalist actions. The Soviets will try to advance their position by capitalizing on the failures of US and western diplomacy.

D. Ideological interests

American position:

To the United States containing the Soviet Union and deterring aggression is safeguarding our own ideology. Gauging the intensity of this variable toward Iran, it is difficult to judge it to be a vital issue. In order for a variable to be 'vital' there must be no ambiguity as to its definition or question that an actor would resort to conventional warfare over its compromise. The definition of American ideology itself is ambiguous at times. There is a proven record that the U.S. will compromise over an ideological issue. (Why did the US not consider it vital to back the Shah with force, given previous announcements by the President?) Public opinion in the US has such an important part to play in the making of US foreign policy. The reaction of the public to the hostage crisis is an important example of the intensity of concern which can be generated. Since the return of the hostages, however, the intensity of this variable has lessened considerably regarding Iran. This variable is a major concern but not strong enough to be classified a vital one.

Soviet position:

For the Soviet Union, relations with the Islamic Revolutionary regime must be tempered, considering the potential harm which could be done. As the revolutionary regime crusades for Islam, it is possible that problems, in the Soviet Central Asian Republics especially those with a large number of Shi'a Muslims, might occur. Any compromise of ideology will not be tolerated by the Soviets. The Soviets, while using

'peaceful co-existence' as a veil, strongly believe that Marxism-Leninism provides them with the advantage of knowing the direction of history. In knowing this direction, they can plan and guide its course. Armed with this knowledge, they will be able to eventually triumph over capitalism. Any attempt to subvert their ideology is a survival intensity threat. To compromise Marxist-Leninist ideological tenets would threaten Soviet internal legitimacy. The Soviets will not allow their values and beliefs to be compromised.

E. Islam

American position;

Given that the US deals in terms of *realpolitik* in the sphere of international relations, we have been blind to the world of Islamic ideology. It is difficult for US policy makers to understand the Islamic world given our different cultural background, the nature of our political culture and most importantly, our own Judeo-Christian analytical framework. Ledeen and Lewis pointed out how the CIA and US decision makers remained unaware of Khomeini's views on Islamic Government despite amount of readily available material on the subject.² The United States remained blind to the rising influence Islam while there was an effective influence relationship in Iran. Since the revolution, the US has come a long way towards recognizing the strength of this nationalist and religious force. There is a steep learning curve for both the American public and national decision makers to conquer before fully accounting for this factor. However,

²Ledeen and Lewis, 19.

while some progress has been made, it remains a peripheral interest to the United States.

Soviet position:

A contrast in intensity of interest is the situation for the Soviet Union. The Soviets manage to cope better with the world of Islam. Soviets like to think of themselves as bastions of defense for the oppressed minorities. They like to claim that their policies account for, protect, and secure the rights and beliefs of all peoples. Nationalistic policies from the time of Lenin's recognition of the Afghan king and the kingdom of Persia witness this fact. The Soviet Union was among the first to recognize and 'accept' the post-revolutionary government of Khomeini. However, while they may claim to favor a position of anti-imperialism and pro-revolutionary change, in fact, they tend to deal more pragmatically with regimes in power.

The Soviet Union can not afford to ignore its own Islamic threat, as the Muslim population in the Central Asian Republics grows at a faster rate than the Slavic population. Historically, the Soviets have dealt with these peoples by co-optation, coercion or force, but have always been successful. The Soviets are likely to resort to any one of a number of strategies to deal with Islam, from co-opting the leadership to overt repression. The bottom line is that Islam remains and will continue to grow as a vital issue for the central government, which can not be ignored.

V. Afghanistan in the Balance; A Case Study

The course of Soviet and American interests in Afghanistan has a long history that traces back to the legacy of the Great Game. Compared to Iran, the Afghan case study is somewhat more complex. Afghanistan carried on a more independent track in foreign policy, traditionally fighting against British designs of expansion. Afghanistan has maintained a neutral stance in world affairs, remaining non-aligned in both world wars and as a member of the non-aligned movement. The Afghan case study is also complicated by the tendency for civil disharmony and the lack of a national identity. The United States has traditionally not had strong interests in Afghanistan when compared to the British and Soviets. This chapter will highlight the development of foreign power interests in Afghan. The chronology of this case study is divided into five periods; 1) The Tzarist legacy and the Great Game. 2) The inner war, which looks at the post-Soviet revolutionary period through the Second World War. 3) The Cold War through the relaxation of tensions during the period of Detente. 4) The end of the Afghan Monarchy and Communist seizure of power. And finally, 5) the Soviet intervention and effects of the war.

A. The Tzarist Legacy, British Power and the Great Game

Afghanistan has occupied a strategic position, as a historic buffer state between the East and West, for hundreds of years. This remote, mountainous land has been a meeting point for cultures from the north, the west and the east as it developed into a cross-roads for trade and commerce. The 1979 Soviet invasion was only the latest of

many incursions by outside powers into Afghanistan. These incursions are chronicled throughout history. Alexander the Great led the Greeks to Afghanistan in 321 B.C. Nomadic tribes from Central Asia in 50 B.C., led by the Kushans, invaded and took control. Mongols in the 13th century were led by Genghis Khan, Hulagu and Tamerlane, terrorizing the indigenous tribes. Persian Safavids from Iran and Muslim Indian Moghuls competed for control in Afghanistan in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. The British and Russians in the 1800s and early 1900s played their part, attempting to expand into this land at one time or another. Afghanistan, as a result of these movements into their territory, shares linguistically, culturally, religiously and politically with the nations that it borders. As each invader has crossed the border, he has added to the traditions and legends of the land. For example, Sunnite Islam, brought by Arabs from the west, had replaced Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and other forms of religious belief by 800 A.D.

As invaders sought to dominate the area, Pashtu tribes from the mountains always seemed to resist co-optation, much the same as rebels still resist the Soviet incursion. Afghanistan is a country not easily dominated. This fact applied not only to outsiders but natives as well. Early Afghan dynasties were hampered in their efforts to build a national identity by inter-tribal and inter-dynastic struggles. The people inhabiting this area have always been characterized as 'fiercely independent', giving in only to the ruler whose legitimacy was defined by their own tribal code. "Until the beginning of the twentieth century

the country was mainly a confederation of tribes, held together by the intrigue and force of the rulers and subject to the machination of rival chieftains and foreign governments, each trying to control the three centers of power-Kandahar, Herat and Kabul."¹ It was not until 1747 that the Kingdom of Afghanistan was formed. As the power of the Persians weakened after the assassination of their leader Nadir Shah in 1747 and as the Muslim Mogul empire in India began to crumble, a vacuum of power gave way to Afghan rule in their own land. Amhad Shah Durrani, noted for his military accomplishments, administration and ability to organize, is credited with being the first to unify the Afghan tribes under consolidated control. By 1750, Amhad Shah had expanded control to an area extending almost to the same borders as present day Afghanistan.

Under the leadership of Amhad Shah Durrani, the Afghan kingdom expanded by conquering lands in India and in the Persian Sāfavid Empire. First, Amad Shah succeeded taking the city of Kabul and controlling the Kabul River valley. He then forced his Mogul opponent to yield the northern Indian territories that included all of the trans-Indus (known today as the Pakistani North-West territories, the Punjab and the Sind). Having gained control of his southern and eastern flanks, Amad Shah's next move was to the north and west. He was able to consolidate control over the city of Herat after a long siege. By 1750, Afghan control extended to all territories between the Indus and Oxus Rivers.

¹U.S. Department of the Army. Area Handbook for Afghanistan, Pamphlet 550-65, 4th ed. 1973, 38.

In 1752, Afghan armies took Lahore. In 1756, Amhad Shah pushed further into India raiding and occupying Dehli. At the time of his death in 1773, the Afghan Empire had expanded to include from Persia in the east, through all of present day Afghanistan and Baluchistan, and to the east of the Kashmir and Punjab. Unfortunately, his successors where not nearly as capable of maintaining control and legitimacy in the Kingdom as he had been capable of gaining it. His son, Timur Shah moved the capital to Kabul from Qandahar, but was not strong enough to prevent the slow erosion of control over all of the Durrani Empire. The Empire continued to be disrupted after Timur's death by rivalry and quarrels among his son's. Strife continued among Afghan rulers until Dost Mohammad ascended to the Afghan throne in 1826. Therefore, by the time the British in India began their expansion to the north, and the Russians to the south, an Afghan ruler had already proven himself an independent and tough fighter. This legacy was to continue.²

British interests, as those of the Russians, date back to before the Durrani Dynasty. The British, through the British East India Company, began looking toward India and Central Asia as early as the 16th century. What began as primarily an economic opportunity, developed into a passion that cost the British a great deal in terms of

²Numerous sources cover this period in detail. Louis Dupree, Afghanistan, 2nd ed. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978), 344-360. includes a comprehensive chart depicting the expansion and disruption of the Afghan empire during the period from 1747 until 1880. Additional detail in W. K. Fraser-Tytler, Afghanistan: A Study of Political Developments in Central and Southern Asia, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 47-69. U.S. Department of the Army. Area Handbook for Afghanistan, 38-47. and Lawrence Ziring, Iran, Turkey and Afghanistan: A Political Chronology, 37-41.

lives and money. Stanley Wolpert describes the rush of European powers to gain resources and trade opportunities in Asia, India and the Indies as a "scramble". This scramble was primarily initiated by a small group of British merchants and by the end of the eighteenth century, the British had established an expanding toehold on the South Asian continent.

The metamorphosis of a small peaceful company of British merchants, residing in the port cities of Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta that they had created on the littoral wilderness, into the rulers of South Asia's subcontinent is one of the most extraordinary events of recent history. Most amazing perhaps is the speed with which it was accomplished, for the essential process took less than fifty years. Yet this brief period at the end of the eighteenth century transformed not only Indian but world history. It introduced a major new factor into the subcontinent's balance of political power, which initially destabilized but ultimately re-unified South Asia.³

The Indian subcontinent provided many fortunes to those Britons willing to risk all for great gain. Private interests soon expanded and as the British established the Raj, India took on new meaning to the United Kingdom. It became the Crown jewel of the Empire. Despite the British imperialistic goals in South Asia, some good came of their presence. The old Muslim rule had begun to fall apart, British interest and British arms helped to fill the void left behind. To the Hindi population, British direct rule meant liberation from the Muslim yoke. It meant education and the opportunity for advancement. It meant the establishment of a orderly system of administration which still survives in India and Pakistan. At the idealistic level, "Evangelical missionaries, Utilitarian Positivists, and later liberals insisted that British motives were altruistic and gloriously idealistic-as some in fact proved to be."⁴ However, it must not be

³Wolpert, 40.

⁴Wolpert, 51.

forgotten that the British goals were primarily economic, backed by the interests of the wealthy and the government, and an opportunity for expansion. Afghanistan held potential as an extension to the Crown jewel and as a buffer from other European power's imperialistic goals on the non-European land mass.

British power finally closed upon the whole of the Indian subcontinent and was beginning to expand into the Central Asian territory by the late 1790s. When looking at the history of this region, it seems odd that the stimulus which began the 'Great Game' should have been the potential threat of interference in India by the French. However, in the early 1800s, the British Government of India sought out the assistance of Persia. Their goal was to obtain help in protecting the northern approaches to India. Their perceived threat was the French or any strong Afghan force that might seek to invade India.

It is important to recall, that Napoleon, at the time, controlled France. Napoleon, in 1801, attempted to arrange an invasion of India with Russian assistance. According to W. K. Fraser-Tytler, a former British Minister to Afghanistan who served between 1910 and 1941 in South Asia, Napoleon again in 1807 attempted to move into the Indian subcontinent.

The peace of Tilsit brought the Tzar Alexander and Napoleon together to concert measures for a joint invasion of India through Persia, where French influence was now predominant. The British Government took immediate, if rather confused, steps to re-establish their position in Tehran, while at the same time Elphinstone and Metcalf were sent to the Afghan and Sikh Courts to arrange defensive alliances against France and Russia.⁵

⁵Fraser-Tytler, 79.

He continued to describe the state of the Durrani empire at this time, explaining that, to the Afghans, any alliance with Persia would have been of little value. The state of disintegration had made the Afghans almost "powerless".

The primary British impulse was defensive during the early 1800s. They were more concerned with the consolidation of their gains in India and offsetting Napoleonic advances, than expanding northward into Afghanistan. This was probably a good thing for the Afghans, as their strength was divided by internal disputes and disagreements. It is also fortunate for the Afghans that Russian power was occupied with other goals at this time. The Russian drive for the south had "begun during the reign of Peter the Great (1682-1725) who viewed expansion in to Asia as his country's destiny, and the absorption of Turkish and Persian Khanates on his border as Russia's 'civilizing mission'."⁶

During the early 1800s the Russians were involved with pressuring the Persians over Georgia, the Caucasus, and their rights on the Caspian Sea. In the Central Asian and Kazakh Steppes the Russians were just beginning to consolidate their position. After victory against Napoleon, the Tzar Alexander I shifted policy toward the Kazakhs, putting an end to Kazakh independence and gaining total control. Similarly, a Russian goal was to further ties and control over the Central Asian Khanates. "The Russian minister of Commerce, Count Rumiantsev, dreamed of large scale economic penetration into the area. Central Asian khanates were visualized as potential counterparts of

⁶Wolpert, 54.

what India was for England.”⁷ Although Russian influence was not yet in direct conflict with British, an essential change had come about for Afghanistan. The turn of the century marked the beginning of Afghanistan’s role as a buffer state between two great empires. As Fraser-Tytler wrote:

The opening years of the nineteenth century witnessed the passing of the last great empires of Central and Southern Asia of Asiatic origin and the rise of two empires in Asia on wholly European foundations. These two empires, the British and the Russian, advancing across Asia throughout the century from bases thousands of miles apart, were driven forward by the necessity which impels civilization ever to press onwards in its search for a security which will stabilize its frontiers and safeguard its commerce.⁸

The British first began to feel the threat of Russian advance into South Asia in 1828. Persia was forced to sign the treaty of Turkmanchai after a two year war with Russia, which granted further commercial concessions to the Russians. The Persians, now squeezed from further expansion to their north and west and encourage by advice and support from the Russians, set out to take the Afghan city of Herat. By 1837 the Afghans, under Dost Muhammad, were being pressured by the Persians from the west and the Sikhs closing from the east, having occupied Peshawar. The British, realizing that the Russians were making advances toward India through the Persians, sent a mission to Kabul to seek the support of the Afghan Amir (King). However, Lord Auckland, the British Governor-General, following instructions from the board of directors of the East India Company, instructed his mission to Kabul not to make any concessions which

⁷Michael Rywkin, Moscow's Muslim Challenge: Soviet Central Asia, (Armonk, New York: Sharpe, 1982), 8.

⁸Fraser-Tytler, 13.

might jeopardize British relations with the Sikhs. The task of the mission was to watch the situation in Afghanistan and take actions which might counteract the advance of Russian influence while not compromising the Sikh relationship.

The British decision to safeguard their alliance with the Sikhs is criticised by a number of historians, who feel that had the British supported Dost Muhammad, the Afghan Amir, the numerous losses during the First Afghan War might have been averted. Dost Muhammad was characterized as a "problematic" personality, who would have eventually compromised the relationship. Yet, he was willing to affirm closer ties with the British to offset Russian and Persian influence in his realm. In 1838, Dost Muhammad therefore felt spurned by the British and saw no other choice than to turn to the Russians and Persians to deal with his most immediately perceived threat, the infringement of Peshawar by the Sikhs. The British began the First Afghan War with the goal of replacing Dost Mohammed and offsetting the Russians. The decision to attack was motivated by the concept of divide and rule rather than allowing a unified opposition by Dost Muhammad.

Dupree summarizes the results of the First Anglo-Afghan War in simple terms. ". . .After four years of disaster, both in honor, material and personnel, the British left Afghanistan as they found it, in tribal chaos and with Dost Muhammad Khan returned to the throne in Kabul." Initially, they were successful in driving Dost Muhammad out of Kabul and replacing him with Shah Shuja, a former Amir, more oriented

toward the British cause. However, in 1840-41 they found that they could no longer control the region and "under pressure, the British signed an agreement calling for their return to India."⁹ The withdrawal of the British garrison from Afghanistan became known as the Signal Catastrophe, with some 15,000 troops and 20 million pounds being lost.

After Shah Shuja was murdered in 1842, Dost Muhammad, the Amir the British had deposed, returned to the Afghan throne. In the years shortly following their tragedy in Afghanistan, the British found themselves at war with the Sikhs, with whom they had sought to remain friends at the cost of their relationship with the Afghans. Dost Muhammad, the Amir who Lord Auckland refused to trust, remained loyal to his agreements with the British until his death in 1863, even when asked to join in mutiny against the British by those in India opposed to the strength of the Raj.¹⁰ Afghan policies, under Dost Muhammad, followed two themes . . . "friendship with the British and attempts to unity the country".¹¹

The Great Game in South Asia had begun. Russian and British competition continued to grow more intense. In 1854-55, The British fought against the Russians in the Crimea, legacy of another area of Anglo-Russian conflict-the Eastern Question. After returning to Kabul to wreck retribution upon Kabul, as punishment for the massacre on the march out of Afghanistan in January 1842, the British left

⁹Ziring, 42.

¹⁰Patrick A. Macrory, *The Fierce Pawns*, (New York: Lippincott, 1966). A detailed reconsideration of the events leading up to, the battles and the aftermath of the First Anglo-Afghan war. Mr. Macrory offers that the British committed a severe blunder in undertaking to subjugate the Afghans rather than listening to their envoy to Dost Muhammad, Capt. Burns.

¹¹Dupree, 401.

Afghanistan. By the terms of the peace, settling the Crimean war, the British were responsible for settling disputes between the Afghans and Persians. The Russians continued to advance to the south, expanding into the Khanates of Central Asia. "The 1855 Russian defeat in the Crimean War spurred the Russian drive into Turkestan in an attempt to redeem Russian national and military honor and gain commercial advantages."¹² The Russian expansion, begun after the Crimean, was slow and continuous.

Russian policy was to slowly yet consistently absorb territory to the south. "Moving south along the Syr Darya River toward the Kingiz Mountains, they took Tomak and Pishpek in 1860, Djulek and Yany-Kurgan in 1861, Turkestan City, Aulie-Ata, and finally Chimkent in 1864."¹³ The Russians handed a "demoralizing defeat" to the 30,000 Muslim defenders of Tashkent in June 1865. They were able to gain a surprise victory and enhance their prestige by taking the city with 1,950 men and twelve cannon. In 1868, the Russians forced Bukhara to become a vassal of the Tzarist state. In taking Bukhara, which was immediately to the north of Afghanistan, the Russians had succeeded in extending their influence to the borders of the buffer state, Afghanistan.

Russian interest in the lands to the south and east can be analyzed as originating from a number of different roots. In one sense, it could have been a desire to expand their belt of defenses beyond the heart of Russian culture in Moscow and St. Petersburg, in an effort to

¹²Rywkin, 11.

¹³Rywkin, 11.

prevent being overrun as earlier in history. But this is perhaps too simplistic a cause. Realistically, the drive for markets in undeveloped regions, both to forestall British influence and to protect their own interests, seems more credible a cause. The Russians. . ."interpreted the British invasion of Afghanistan(1839-42) as a direct threat to their interests."¹⁴ Also, following the Crimean war, Russia's prestige at home and abroad was low. Expansion, eastward and southward, offered the Russians the opportunity to regain some of their lost influence. Over the long term, filling the geo-political gap left by the collapse of the Great Horde offered an opportunity, too choice to be by-passed. As Russia became a European power, it is possible that the tzars felt a growing superiority over the Muslim, "barbaric Asians". This is closely linked to anti-Islamic attitudes, stemming from a traditional anti-Turkish orientation. It must be remembered that the 1800s was the 'age of European Imperialism', and that as such it was natural for all the European powers to seek to expand beyond their borders to lands offering new fortunes.¹⁵

After the First Afghan War the British made little contact to the north of their Indian conquests. British policies wavered between two extremes. The British were undecided as to whether to ignore the north or to attempt to take it over and incorporate it into the British Empire by force. This second alternative was known as the "forward

¹⁴Dupree, 404. States that "Britain's response to Russia's moves in Central Asia resemble the Monroe Doctrine, in that the British attempted to extend their influence into an area where their control did not extend...In essence, the British, in their two nineteenth century wars in Central Asia were fighting the Russians, but it was the Afghans, in reality, who suffered."

¹⁵Many authors offer their own reasons for Russian expansion. These are mentioned by Dupree, Fraser-Tytler, and Rywkin.

school". The British still remained concerned about Russian intentions toward the south. In the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1873, the Russians agreed to the Amu Darya River as the southern limit of their advance in Central Asia and to recognize all the territory to the south as outside the Russian sphere of influence.¹⁶ British domestic politics came to affect the competition over South Asia in the Great Game in 1874 and the era of indecision over the course of the rivalry ended.

In 1874, Benjamin Disraeli (later Earl Beaconsfield) became prime minister of Great Britain,, and the policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of Afghanistan ended. The "masterly inactivity" of the previous decade shifted to the Forward Policy. . Such rapid shifts in policy confused Sher Ali (Dost Muhammad's successor) and he greeted these new British overtures with suspicion.¹⁷

The Afghans continued to feel confused and pressured by the Russians for concessions and by the shift in British policy as they began to move further toward the Afghan border. (The British took Quetta and converted it to a military base in 1876.) Meantime, the Russians and British continued their competition over the Eastern Question. In 1877, Russia declared war on Turkey. The British, first warned, and then sent a fleet to Constantinople to confront the Russians. No shots were fired but the potential for open conflict existed. As in the aftermath of the Crimean War, the Tzar and his close circle felt stifled with their failures in the Balkans. The successes they had achieved and continued to pursue in Central Asia were a consolation. W. K. Fraser-Tytler includes a translation of a Memorandum from Prince Gorchakov, dated 21 November 1864, which

¹⁶Area Handbook, 49. Dupree, 406. Fraser-Tytler, 140.

¹⁷Dupree, 406.

describes the orientation of Tzarist policy toward Central Asia. In part it reads. . .

Our august Master has directed me to explain succinctly, but with clearness and precision, our position in Central Asia, the interests which prompt our actions in that part of the world, and the aims which we pursue. The position of Russia in Central Asia is that of all civilized states which come into contact with half-savage, wandering tribes possessing no fixed social organization...It invariably happens in such cases that the interests of security on the frontier, and commercial relations, compel the more civilized state to exercise a certain ascendancy over neighbors whose turbulence and nomad instincts render them difficult to live with. . .¹⁸

The Russians felt compelled to continue to push into Afghanistan. Sher Ali, the new Afghan Amir, realizing the Russian intentions, had requested the British to help guard against the Tzarist advance to the south. The British, however, using the 1873 Anglo-Russian agreement as an excuse, did little more than help the Afghans to revamp their armies. "Sher Ali was able, with British subsidy, to start modernizing his army, but Anglo-Afghan relations deteriorated when a political shift in England inaugurated once again a "forward policy" of intervention".¹⁹ Historians differ as to whether Sher Ali asked for assistance from the Russians after the break down of the Anglo-Afghan relationship, or whether the Russians forced him to accept a diplomatic mission headed by General Stolietov. It is generally agreed that the presence of the Russian mission in Kabul is the reason for the start of the Second Afghan War. British troops, again, invaded Afghanistan, crossing the Khyber, Bolan and Peiwar passes. They quickly occupied the Kurraam and Khyber Valleys. The second war drove Sher Ali out of Kabul. The British replaced him with Sardar Abdur

¹⁸Fraser-Tytler, Appendix II, p319.

¹⁹Area Handbook, 49.

Rahman. Dupree describes the Afghan resistance as light. "In all fairness, however, it must be stated that, at this time, little unity existed among the tribal leaders, and resistance against the British was unorganized and sporadic."²⁰ The new leader was forced to accept an agreement which essentially made Afghanistan an appendage to the English Raj in India, allowing internal autonomous rule, but tethering foreign relations to British wants in a sort of early form of "Finlandization".

Abdur Rahman was able to transform Afghanistan to a more or less independent position. Taking advantage of both Russian and British ties, he ruled by consolidating control and modernizing those institutions which best aided his maintenance of power. Disraeli's Party in Britain fell from power in Britain in 1880 and the new government headed by Lord Gladstone decided to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan back to the Raj. Russia moved forward in Central Asia taking the Khivan Khanate in 1881 and Merv in 1884. In 1885, Russian Cossacks took Panjdeh. The Russian limit of advance had moved to within 100 miles of the British Sphere. At Panjdeh Russian and Afghan troops fought. The Afghans were forced to retreat. At the news of the Afghan loss, . . ."Gladstone rose in the house of commons solemnly to warn Russia that a march against Herat would mean war with Great Britain. Two corps of the Indian Army were fully mobilized, and the liberal prime minister requested immediate authorization. . . to raise a loan of eleven million pounds to 'protect our

²⁰Dupree, 409.

vital national interests' in western Afghanistan."²¹ For Abdur Rahman this condition was ideal, in that now the British proved willing to insure the integrity of his borders.

The solution to the 1885 Anglo-Russian crisis was the creation of a Joint Boundary Commission to establish the boundaries of both the Russian and British zones of influence. Much controversy over the drawing of the borders continued during the 1880s and 1890s. The question of the boundary along the Amu Darya continued until 1946. The Durrand line of 1893, delineating a boundary between Raj controlled India and Afghanistan is still blamed as a false political border, which unknowingly cut Pashtu tribal areas apart and continued to cause anti-western sentiment among tribal members. The Durrand line has been described by many different titles, a "cartographic line of convenience, a political and ethnic horror"²², . . . "untenable, strategically, politically, geographically"²³, and a host of others. The Durrand line continues to be disputed by Pashtun tribesmen in Pakistan and Afghanistan today.²⁴ The result of these borders for the European powers, while disputed by the Afghan tribes, was the creation of a line-a defined demarcation-which served to mark spheres of influence. While Abdur Rahman consolidated power and

²¹Wolpert, 64.

²²Rubinstein, 125.

²³Wolpert, 65.

²⁴Space precludes a in depth discussion of the border controversy at this juncture. For in depth analysis see; Akbar S. Ahmed, "Tribes and States in Central and South Asia", Asian Affairs(Britain), June 1980, 152-168.; Selig S. Harrison, "Baluch Nationalism and Super Power Rivalry", International Security, Winter 1980-81, 152-163. and for an analysis of how these borders impact on the current dispute following the 1979 Soviet invasion see; Anthony Hyman, "Afghan/Pakistan Border Disputes", Asian Affairs(Britain), Oct 1980, 264-275.

began the nation building process in Afghanistan, the European powers were appeased temporarily in South Asia.

Alvin Rubinstein describes the end of the Great Game as occurring suddenly in 1907. The Russo-Japanese war in the Far East had its toll, both on the domestic policies and foreign policies of the Tzar. "Threatened in the Far East by Japan (by whom it had been defeated in 1904-05) and in Europe by Germany, Russia decided that Afghanistan was not worth its jeopardizing the prospect of friendship with Britain at a time when it desperately needed allies. Uncertainty in Europe mandated stability along the Central Asian rimland."²⁵ The 1907 Anglo-Russian Convention of St. Petersburg, which formally split up Persia into three zones, defined Afghanistan as a neutral buffer zone. Russia agreed to not consider Afghanistan as falling within its sphere of influence. The Afghans, as usual in the actions of the European powers in making decisions affecting the outlands, were not consulted. The fact that they were not consulted before the conclusion of the St. Petersburg Convention incensed the Afghan Amir, Habibullah, and he refused to ratify the agreement. For both Britain and Russia, this was the apex of the age of European imperialism. Both Great powers were soon occupied elsewhere with the growth of German power.

The causes for the outbreak of the First World War have been analyzed numerous times. It is beyond the scope of this paper to relook at the causes of this war, except as they affected the course of national interests in South Asia. Imperialism, Nationalism, Socialism, an

²⁵Rubinstein, 125.

unchecked Arms race, ideological differences between political systems and the growth of an inflexible alliance system were all contributing factors to the course of world events after 1907.²⁶ The effect in Afghanistan can be discerned from Habibullah's actions following the signature of the 1907 Convention and his refusal to sign it. Given the possibility for complete independence and international recognition of such, the Afghans looked to other powers for assistance, including the Ottoman Turks.

The rise of nationalistic powers was evident in Afghanistan. Wolpert writes about the ties between Habibullah and the Pan-Islamic movement, most strongly felt in the Ottoman Turkish Empire. "Frustrated in his friendly overtures and appeals for modernization, feeling betrayed by British duplicity, Habibullah looked to the Universal Brotherhood of Islam for help in leading his land to a richer, happier future."²⁷ Habibullah was in power during a time when the pan-Islamic movement was growing rapidly. Though torn between the Pan-Islam and Afghan nationalism, when it came to deciding between the two he choose to stay with nationalistic feelings.

Throughout the period just before and after the outbreak of the war Germany counted Afghan leaders. It was their hope to gain influence with the Amir, and through this contact to offset the British and Russian war effort by causing the Afghans to declare jihad, holy

²⁶Gordon A. Craig and Alexander L. George, Force and Statecraft, (New York; Oxford University Press, 1983). Craig, Europe: 1815-1914. VonLaue, Why Lenin? Why Stalin?, and James Joll, The Origins of the First World War, (New York: Longman, 1984). all discuss in detail the development of the world political system leading up the the war.

²⁷Wolpert, 72.

war, against German enemies. British forces in India, the primary German target, had been depleted by the war effort. Russian forces continued to be diverted to the European theater. The Germans, in a draft Treaty of Friendship, dated January 24, 1916, offered Afghanistan the opportunity for total independence, as well as arms and support.²⁸ German efforts in Afghanistan were related to their efforts with the Ottoman Turkish Caliph. Habibullah, feeling that his forces were not strong enough, even with German aid, declined to engage the British.

The end of the First World War marked the beginning of a new era. European imperialism had been thwarted. Britain had begun to reassess its role in the international environment. In Afghanistan, following Habibullah's murder, the state headed toward a more independent role on its own. Ademec attributes Habibullah's death to the legacy of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 and to his indecision in declaring jihad upon the British. By remaining to appear loyal to the British cause, Habibullah had earned the disrespect of the nationalistic forces at play in Afghanistan.²⁹ Russia too had begun a new course in the hands of the Bolsheviks. The Bolshevik revolution marked a definite change in the conduct of Russian foreign policy. It immediately ended the provisions of the Anglo-Russian Convention, as it ended all treaty obligations signed during Tzarist times. Bolshevik ideology despised

²⁸Ademec, 35.

²⁹Ademec, 43.

colonialism, evident through Lenin's writings. Lenin judged colonialism and imperialism to be the "Achilles heel" of the capitalist world.³⁰

At the end of this first period of the development of national interests in Afghanistan, there are several factors which are obvious. First, for the United States, there was virtually no interest and very little contact with Afghanistan, save for independent adventurers.³¹ The United States was still in the process of developing its self-identity. By the end of the age of European imperialism, Russia had established a secure hold on the Khanates of Central Asia, but had stopped short because of domestic and foreign policy problems caused by the Russo-Japanese war and domestic strife.

Russia was spurred on in Central Asia by a whole complex of motives--the quest for a secure frontier, the provocations offered by unstable neighbors, the fear of being excluded from the area by England, and the temptations of diplomatic leverage, economic profit and military glory.³²

Defensively for the Russians, it was necessary to offset the advances of the British into Afghanistan. Later, with the rise of German power it again became even more complex an issue. Economically the markets of Central Asia, as those of Persia were considered a major national interest. In terms of world order, the nineteenth century provided a different set of values for the world

³⁰Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, 29.

³¹Patrick Macrory writes about "General" Josiah Harlan, an American who went to India originally for the East India Company. While there, he transferred to the Artillery and then went to work for the Moghul leader Ranjet Singh in the 1830s. Later, when sent to negotiate with the Afghans he changed sides. p38. Dupree describes a book Harlan later wrote about his service to Dost Mohammad, in which he titles himself "Josiah Harlan, Late Counselor of State; Aide-de-camp, and General of the Staff of Dost Muhamed Khan, Ameer of Kabul". p378.

³²Seymour Becker, Russia's Protectorates in Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865-1924, (Cambridge Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1968), 23.

powers at that time. The legacy of imperialism, meant expansion, competition, and subjugation of weaker, less developed neighbors. The Russians under the Tzarist leadership felt it their duty to deliver those "less fortunate" from their cloak of darkness. Ideologically, therefore they felt compelled to expand their borders into Central Asia, and beyond into Afghanistan. The October Revolution brought about a fundamental change to Tzarist foreign policy.

B. The Inner War

The second important time frame to consider in tracing the development of Soviet and US National Interests in Afghanistan is the inter war period. During the First World War and in the years afterwards, many changes appeared in Soviet and in British foreign policy toward South Asia. The United States still remained in the cloud of international isolationism, and U.S. interests in Afghanistan were limited. A number of points are important to consider during this period; the role of the Afghan Amir in formulating policy, the third Afghan war's result on British interests, and the course of Soviet-Afghan relations. This section will trace the development of interests between the end of the First World War, through the rise of Nazi power leading to the outbreak of the Second World War, and finally discuss Afghanistan's position at the end of the Second World War.

During the interwar period, U.S. interests remained limited outside the European sphere; although traces of interest were detectable following the Millspaugh mission to Iran. For Afghanistan, on the other hand, the attempt to involve the United States in the delicate balance between the British in India and the Soviets to the north was a potential alternative to the rising interests of the Germans. "Like Germany, the United States was not a colonial power; it was sufficiently distant from Afghanistan not to constitute a political factor, and it possessed an economic and industrial potential which

exceeded that of any other Western power."¹ America was reluctant to involve itself in a region torn between Soviet and British activity.

Afghanistan, at the outset, offered little obvious commercial value worth pursuing for the Americans. Additionally, there were perils in this country which threatened the American government's ability to protect the rights of its citizens operating in Afghanistan on business. However, some private American citizens explored opportunities in Afghanistan. One opportunity was granted to the Inland Oil Exploration Company, which won an oil exploration concession. The deterioration of the international political situation in 1938 forced this corporation to cancel its commitment in Afghanistan. American interests were not formally established until 1942.

The course of Soviet and British interests on Afghanistan was more complex and detailed. Afghanistan, a nation of innumerable internal complexities, was faced with balancing a new, revolutionary, and expansionist Bolshevik regime to the north with the more predictable and proven British imperialistic designs in India. In February 1919, Amir Habibullah was murdered. He was succeeded by his son Amanullah. Amanullah is characterized as having been a progressive nationalist, anti-British, and, in his later years, a reformist, who urged the westernization of his country. It was his forced westernization, leading to changes against Islamic tradition and culture, which forced his abdication twenty years later. Amanullah is noted for two things; first, for gaining independence for his country from the spheres of

¹Adernec, 234.

influence scheme as established by the 1907 St. Petersburg convention between Russia and Britain; and second, establishing relations with the newly created Soviet Union.

One of Amanullah's first acts upon coming to power was declaring jihad-holy war-on the British in India. The initial attack and subsequent war was short, and became known as the Third Afghan war. Analysts and historians offer somewhat differing reasons for Amanullah's actions. Anthony Arnold states that Amanullah was not satisfied with the British response to his initial declaration of independence after having come into power, and that he was backed or saw the potential for military and financial backing from the fledgling Soviet Russian republic.² In a 1986 interpretation, Joseph Collins says that among other things Amanullah did not wish to follow in his fathers footsteps and make the same mistakes.³ It is also possible that it was . . . "Partly to divert internal discontent toward an enemy and partly because of his belief that an Indian nationalist revolution against the British was imminent. . ."⁴ The former British diplomat, W. K. Fraser-Tytler hastens to add that Amanullah looked to build religious fervor by calling for a holy war and "holding out to them (his followers) the fair prospect of loot which an invasion of India would furnish to his

²Anthony Arnold, Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective, (Stanford, Ca.: Hoover International Studies, 1981), 9.

³Joseph J. Collins, The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: A Study in the Use of Force in Soviet Foreign Policy, (Lexington, Ma.: Lexington Books, 1986), 8.

⁴U.S. Army Handbook on Afghanistan, 52

followers as it had done to their forefathers from the days of Mahmud of Ghazni".⁵

In the end, the British gained the overall victory in the war. However, their victory was costly; politically, and in terms of men and resources lost. England after the First World War was exhausted. The toll had been paid with British lives, and in influence in India. Muslim troops in Raj Indian regiments had begun to desert after the start of the jihad. Wolpert says, . . ."Heat stroke and cholera claimed as many lives in that last part of the Anglo-Afghan wars as Pathan marksmen."⁶ The peace of the Third Afghan war was signed at Rawalpindi on 8 August 1919 and confirmed by treaty several years later. It was an important step for the Afghans and Amanullah because it finally recognized Afghan de facto and de jure independence.

The Third Afghan War had another effect for the British. In the post WWI era this marked only the beginning of the challenge to their dominance over South Asia. Nationalism, as in Europe before the Great War, became an ever increasingly important factor of stability for the Empire.⁷ For Amanullah, the war brought a wave of popularity which lasted until his imposition of westernizing reforms in later years. Newly independent Afghanistan was open to the prospect of involvement by other outside powers. The Soviet Union was the first nation to formally recognize the sovereignty and independence of Afghanistan.

⁵Fraser-Tytler, 195.

⁶Wolpert, 76.

⁷Wolpert, Chapters 6 and 7 outline the decline of British power and influence leading to Indian independence in 1947.

Anthony Arnold, as mentioned above, alludes to Soviet 'assistance' in Amanullah's decision to initiate the Third Afghan War. But he also points out that the Soviet Union was involved in a civil war at home, and almost at war with the British. The evidence does not support either Soviet military or financial backing for the war. There are several other considerations which make the idea of Soviet intrigue in Afghanistan's internal affairs at this time an unlikely possibility. First, the young Soviet state was in a desperate state of turmoil and flux. Throughout the country there was a spirit of discord against the Bolsheviks, as well as the Tzarists who preceded them. This extended beyond the small enclaves of White Generals conducting war against the Soviets with Allied assistance. Second, financially it would have been difficult to support the external war cause.⁸ Soviet resources were wrecked following the end of the First World War and the Russian Civil War. It is doubtful that they would have been able to muster sufficient capital and resources to provide any form of assistance.

The Soviets considered the British the main colonialist power in the region. Idealistically, the young and inexperienced leaders of the Soviet Union were anti-British, and against any and all forms of British imperialism. Supporting revolution against imperialists was in line with the ultimate goal of ridding the world of capitalists. Therefore, supporting the Afghans in their fight against the British imperialists was a plus for the fledgling Bolshevik cause and the ideals of the

⁸Arnold, 10-12.

Socialist revolution. However, the Afghan orientation was not Marxist-Leninist or even socialist. Supporting the Afghan people in their fight was in the best interests of drawing down the enemies of the Soviet state rather than forwarding the cause of socialist revolution. It was also in the interests of the young Soviet state to attempt retribution against the British for their part in the ongoing Russian Civil War. Support of the Afghan position weakened English ability to continue to wage war in the minds of Soviet leaders.⁹

The Soviets today provide a different perspective from the realpolitik situation that Lenin faced. The Soviet position today is that. . . "Although Soviet-Afghan relations developed in conditions of acute struggle against the intrigues of Britain and other imperialist powers, the friendship and co-operation of the Soviet and Afghan peoples passed the test of time and are a model of relations between countries with different social systems."¹⁰

Beyond the Soviet opportunity to disrupt the British position, it is important to examine the position of the Afghans and the state of disarray in the Soviet state. Before the success of the revolution in 1917, it was Lenin's belief that one of the major keys to the success of world wide revolution was the support of the peoples of the Orient. One way to win the support of these peoples was to play upon the

⁹Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, 123; Hammond, 7. and Richard Pipes, The Formation of the Soviet Union: Communism and Nationalism, (Cambridge Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1954), 180.

¹⁰Ivan Kovalenko, Soviet Policy for Asian Peace and Security, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976), 21.

downtrodden position dealt by their colonial legacy by forwarding the concept of self-determination. As Helen d'Encausse wrote. . .

When he took power in a multi-national state, Lenin knew that he would encounter special problems, those dominated by nationalities, the solutions put forward by the new regime were largely conditioned by the situation which faced it in October, the state of quasi-secession of the non-Russian peoples of the Russian Empire. . .¹¹

Lenin went to great lengths to gain the support of Eastern peoples living in the former Russian Empire. Richard Pipes explains the situation by considering Lenin's faith in the importance of national movements among the colonial peoples and their role in world wide revolution. He wrote:

This faith-strengthened rather than weakened after Lenin's advent to power - explains the great lengths to which he and his regime were willing to go to win the sympathies of the Eastern peoples residing in the Russian Empire. Pan-Islamism, Pan-Turanianism, religious orthodoxy - all these sensitive areas of Moslem consciousness were played upon by the Soviet government during the Revolution in order to gain a foothold in the Moslem borderlands and to penetrate the Asiatic possessions of the West. Early in December 1917 the Soviet government issued, over the signatures of Lenin and Stalin, an appeal to Russian and foreign Moslems in which it made extremely generous promises in return for Moslem support. . .¹²

For the Afghans, under Amanullah, Lenin's concept of self-determination offered a new possibility. Amanullah pictured a great Central Asian confederation incorporating the old Russian territories of Khiva and Bukhara. There were a number of advantages to such a union in Amanullah's eyes. Primarily, and beyond an economic advantage. . ."the formation of a Central Asian Confederation, with Kabul the dominant power. . . would have provided an excellent buffer against Russian encroachment from the north as well as furthering

¹¹ Helene C. d'Encausse, Lenin: Revolution and Power, New York: Longman, 1982), 102.

¹² Pipes, The Formation of the Soviet Union, 155.

Afghanistan's own pan-Islamic aspirations."¹³ Some fertile ground already existed in the Central Asian territory.

Resistance to Russian expansion had been established as early as the sixteenth century. Bennigsen and Broxup identify three major categories of resistance to absorption by the Russians. (1) Armed resistance against 'Infidel' rule, undertaken under the auspices of jihad-directed by Sufi brotherhoods and revolts by Muslim feudal lords. (2) Preservation of Islam from the challenge posed by rival ideologies, like Christianity, Buddhism and Marxism. (3) Temporary co-operation with 'Infidels' while hoping to re-establish lost power. While these methods had been used for some time, the Basmachi movement offered the greatest challenge to the Soviets in Central Asia.¹⁴

The Soviets began an armed attempt to quell opposition in the Muslim borderlands. The dissatisfied native Muslim population took to partisan warfare to fight back. The movement began in the Ferghana valley and moved outward, until it finally extended to all of Turkestan. This included Khiva and Bukhara. Pipes calls the Basmachestvo resistance movement "perhaps the most persistent and successful in the entire history of Soviet Russia." Its members were called Basmachi. They began as ordinary bandits, whose targets were throughout the countryside, and the Tzarists "had never been quite successful in suppressing them". This force slowly gained strength after the Provisional government took control in 1917. The Koland government in

¹³Arnold, 11. Hammond, Red Flag Over Afghanistan, also discusses Amanullah's aspirations.

¹⁴Bennigsen and Broxup, 62-87.

1918 co-operated with them and managed to make one of the Basmachi leaders a captain of their troops. According to Pipes, when that territorial government fell to the Soviets many Muslims connected to the autonomous government and area residents went over to the Basmachi and disappeared into the mountains to join them. The Basmachi after this point were viewed as "protectors and liberators" "The principal weakness of the Basmachi movement was its lack of unity."¹⁵

In a number of ways the basmachi movement resembles the lack of unity and independent control visible in Afghanistan's current resistance movements. Their problems of command and control, communication and co-ordination are easily compared. The Soviet advantage then, as today, was in better organization, control of the urban centers and lines of communication. This movement became a new type of fight for the Soviets. The Soviets were required to devote a great deal of money and manpower to stop the movement. The Basmachi in later years were able to cross the Amu Darya into Afghanistan to find sanctuary, a situation analogous to their descendents today as they cross into Pakistan to seek security and support.¹⁶

The possibility for a great Central Asian Confederation never materialized for Amanullah. Although the Soviets at the Third Congress of the Soviets in January 1918 adopted the Declaration of the Rights of

¹⁵Pipes, Formation, 178

¹⁶This topic is covered in limited fashion by Collins, Ch 1; Hammond, Ch 2; Rwykin, pp34-44; and Pipes, Formation 174-184.

the Working and Exploited Masses, which stated that; "All the nations have the right to decide, if and on what basis they could participate in the federal government and the other federal Soviet institutions", policy was overcome by realpolitik.¹⁷ Internal opposition continued and the Soviets needed to take action to consolidate their position. The expected world revolution that the Soviets had been waiting for failed to materialize. Under pressure to survive, and facing opposition from within, as well as from without, in 1921 the Soviets began to normalize relations beyond their borders. In Central Asia, the Soviets furthered their recognition of Afghanistan with a formal Treaty of Friendship on 28 February 1928.

This Treaty served both the Bolshevik cause and Afghan interests. For Afghanistan, the treaty provided for badly needed subsidies. Soviet assistance was delivered, although never in the quantities which would have been sufficient for their cause. Afghanistan used Soviet military assistance to help suppress a revolt in 1924.

For the Soviets, normalized relations with Afghanistan provided several advantages. The Soviets hoped for a base from which to further their revolutionary cause. Afghanistan could, theoretically, provide such a base to the south. Ideologically, the treaty was consistent with Lenin's statements concerning Nationalities policy. Kovalenko confirms this position quoting the text from the agreement. . . "The High Contracting Parties, recognizing their mutual independence

¹⁷d'Encausse, Lenin, 104.

and binding themselves to respect it, now enter into regular diplomatic relations." This essentially meant that the Soviet state recognized the sovereignty of the Afghan state. Adding the statement. . ."The RSFSR and Afghanistan pledged 'not to enter into any military or political agreement with a third State which might prejudice on of the Contracting Parties.'"¹⁸ . . . the Soviets hoped to consolidate and secure their position by eliminating the possibility of an offensive coalition being formed by Afghanistan with any other party. While preventing either party from entering into external alliances, and thereby, effectively establishing Afghanistan's role as a buffer state, this treaty also formalized Afghanistan's commitment not to aid Basmachi insurgents seeking support in Afghan territory.

The Treaty of Friendship was a cause for happiness initially after its signature in 1921. However, Amanullah's elation was not to last long. He began to doubt the sincerity of the Soviet commitment to the agreement. Fears stemmed, at first, from Muslim suppression in the Soviet Central Asian Republics. These initial fears were aggravated by an infusion of refugees to Afghanistan from the Soviet Union. Here, again, is a situation analogous to the flow of refugees from Afghanistan to Pakistan since the 1979 Soviet invasion. Amanullah's dismay was exacerbated following the first Soviet invasion in 1925. Although by today's standards this incident was small, it was to be the catalyst for reduction of Soviet influence in Afghanistan. The controversy centered over a small island in the center of the Amu

¹⁸Kovalenko, 20.

Darya River, which had never been definitively identified as either Soviet or Afghan. "Uzbek refugees from Soviet Central Asia moved to the island, including some Basmachi, who used it as a base for raids into Soviet territory."¹⁹

As the Soviets attempted to consolidate their position within the former Russian Tzarist Empire, they turned their policy from world wide revolution to building communism within one country. In Afghanistan, the age old problem, between the central ruler and tribal disunity continued. Afghan-British relations were hampered by Kabul's inability to settle the Pathan tribal attacks on British interests in India.²⁰ In 1927 and 1928, the Amir undertook a trip to Europe, seeking support and developmental assistance. While the excursion was the opening of European interest in Afghanistan's future, it marked the beginning of the end of Amanullah's rule. As Adam Adamec writes, the domestic drawbacks in the end were ultimately greater than the foreign policy advances.

Assessing Amanullah's visit to Europe is difficult. Economically the visit would have been beneficial, even though immediate expenditures probably exceeded the gains; in terms of foreign policy, the visit was an unqualified success; but in terms of domestic policy, it was no doubt an important factor in strengthening Amanullah's opposition, contributing to his downfall some six months later.²¹

Returning home from Europe, the Amir began a series of reforms that could easily be interpreted as westernizing the country. The situation was similar to some of the later changes made in Iran by Reza Shah. Changes affected finance, education-especially the rights of

¹⁹Hammond, 12. Also see Adamec, 109-111, for a detailed description.

²⁰Ziring, 48.

²¹Adamec, 130.

military students to religious education-and the status of women in the society. His reform measures earned Amanullah the distrust of many segments of the society. The majority of Afghans did not have the same commitment to westernization and reform as the Amir. As such, he lost popularity and legitimacy. When the ulema began to seek change, hostility against the ruler set in. By January 1929 general revolt broke out against the Amir.

This situation was a challenge to Soviet interests. As the leader of a World revolutionary movement, ideologically, it was in their best interest to aid the rebellion. Politically, it was a challenge to the status of the Soviet state because since their recognition of the primacy of the interests of the Soviet state in 1921, state to state relations had taken priority over ideological interests. Unofficially, the Soviets decided to assist the falling regime. Hammond compares this decision to previous Soviet resolutions to intervene in Turkey and Iran. His position is that since the communist movements in these nations were nonexistent or weak the potential for communist government was also weak. But since each of these nations were headed by men who were against the British influence, it was more pragmatic to support the anti-imperialistic position. "The cause of world revolution was subordinated to the national interests of the Russian state."²²

Hammond calls the Soviet decision to aid the restoration of Amanullah to the throne the "Second Soviet Invasion" of Afghanistan. Other authors, Adamec and Dupree in particular, do not interpret the

²²Hammond, 15.

event exactly in the same fashion. The precise details of this incident are not known, but what appears to have occurred is that the Soviets allowed a force of insurgents--either Afghans living in the Soviet Union or Uzbeks of similar appearance--under the leadership of the former Ambassador to Moscow, to cross from Soviet Central Asia into Afghanistan. The objective of this force was to attempt a counter coup to restore Amanullah to his throne. Their efforts were cut short when the Amir abdicated his throne and left the country. Amanullah's brother assumed the throne, but only remained a matter of days before following him out of the country. With the Amir and his brother gone from the country, there was no longer any reason for Soviet support. The disputed force withdrew in June 1929.

Amanullah's abdication left a Tadjik rebel leader, Bacha-i Saggua to begin a harried and short period of rule. He was only temporarily able to remain a legitimate and effective leader. His rule was challenged from the beginning by various groups attempting to restore Amanullah to power. By the end of October 1929 he was forced out and eventually executed. Nadir Khan, a member of the Afghan royal family was clear to come to the throne, his effort supported mostly by his family and Pashtun tribal confederation.²³ Nadir Khan is known for pacifying the tribes of Afghanistan and thereby consolidating his

²³Various historians differ in their interpretations of whether or not the Britain supported Nadir Khan's assumption of power. Newell in The Struggle for Afghanistan says that Nadir "seized the throne with the support of the British, who feared tribal uprisings on their Indian borders." [p38] John C. Griffiths, in Afghanistan: Key to a Continent (Boulder, Co: Westview, 1981), 51. states that Nadir Khan came to power solely by the actions of the tribes that supported him on both sides of the Durrand line. Most other writers tend to agree with Mr. Griffiths.

position. He was able to win their confidence by returning to Islamic practice, moderate leadership and avoiding Amanullah's mistake of forced westernization. Nadir Khan believed in social and economic development, but without forced measures. Tribal unrest in India figured into the equation of how much support the British could be seen giving the new Amir of Afghanistan.²⁴ Relations vis-a-vis the Soviets returned to a more or less normal stance.

Under the tutelage of Nadir Khan, Afghan foreign relations could best be described as pragmatic. He is described as more oriented towards the British than Amanullah. However, relations with Moscow remained on a relatively friendly basis. The Soviets were again the first nation to recognize Nadir Khan and his government after his assumption of power.²⁵ Anglo-Afghan relations centered upon the continuing tribal problems along the Indian Northwest frontier, while the Basmachi problem in the Soviet Central Asian Republics complicated Soviet-Afghan relations.

The 1926 Soviet-Afghan treaty had helped bring the Basmachi problem under control in the Central Asian Republics, along with intense efforts by the Red Army. Michael Rywkin writes that a combination of domestic policies in these republics helped bring the basmachi challenge into check. These domestic efforts included; land reform, a Communist Party organization, offers of amnesty to those

²⁴Adamec, 175. States that the British were ambivalent in their position towards Nadir's assumption of power. Their primary concern according to this author was not allowing Nadir Shah to be viewed as having accepted aid from the British. British fear was that if Afghans perceived that Nadir Shah was pro-British, then he would not be accepted as Amir.

²⁵Collins, 12 and Adamec, 184. Again Newell disagrees with their analysis stating that Soviet-Afghani relations were not friendly from this point onward.

members of the Basmāchestvo willing to change sides, allowing concessions concerning the practice of Islamic traditions, such as religious schooling and shariat courts, and finally the effect of the long wear down of the general populace making the resistance effort seem futile. Additionally the New Economic Policy, which loosened constrictions on private trade and food rationing, helped reverse the anti-communist sentiment of the population. However, in 1929, the beginning of forced collectivization helped to briefly revive the movement.²⁶

In 1930, one of the Soviet chief concerns along the Amu Darya border with Afghanistan was eliminating the basmachi resistance crossing the international border on raiding actions. Basmachi raiders continually sought refuge in the northern areas of Afghanistan, frustrating Soviet Army attempts to put a stop to their actions. "Finally, in June 1930, the exasperated Soviet forces crossed the Amu Darya and pursued Ibrahim Beg (a basmachi leader from the early 1920s who fled to Afghanistan in 1924 and reinitiated rebel strikes in 1930) for about forty miles into Afghanistan. They failed to capture him, but the invasion naturally alarmed the Afghan government."²⁷ Afghanistan, alarmed, responded by sending a force north across the Hindu Kush mountains to pursue the basmachi leader. This situation led

²⁶Rywkin, 43.

²⁷From Hammond, 12. also see Pipes, *Formation*, 256-260. Dupree, 460-461. and Adamec, 202. Hammond calls this cross border hot pursuit the "Third Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan". Fraser-Tytler, 230, on the other hand states that "This was the first and so far as I know the last occasion on which Soviet forces have violated the northern boundary of Afghanistan since it was laid down." Note that Fraser-Tytler was a member of the British diplomatic staff from 1910-1941 in India and Afghanistan.

to the Soviet-Afghan 1931 Treaty of Neutrality and Nonaggression, a renegotiated version of the 1926 Treaty, by which both sides promised to respect each others neutrality, prevent activities causing political or military injury in the others territory. They also promised not to engage in any form of secret pacts with neighboring powers. The Soviet goal in this agreement was to offset the activities of any partisan force operating against their government in Central Asia.²⁸

The principle significance of the 1931 Treaty of Neutrality and Nonaggression perhaps was not the immediate result of quelling the Basmachi movement's operations from inside Afghanistan. Kovalenko, writing in the Soviet perspective, says "it envisaged the adoption of necessary measures in event of a threat to Afghanistan from British imperialism and attempts to use Afghan territory for provocations against the Soviet Union."²⁹ Beyond this, the treaty was used as justification for Soviet demands on the Afghan government to expel Nazis during World War II and to limit relations with the United States during the post-war period. The agreement, though at first for the Soviets only a defensive accord, became an instrument by which the Soviets could legalistically control the foreign relations of Afghanistan by prohibiting alignment with the west.

Nadir Shah's rule did not last long. Like so many of his predecessors he was assassinated. Nadis Shah's death brought his son Mohammad Zahir to the throne. Mohammad Zahir is characterized as a weak and indifferent leader. Although this might be true, its

²⁸Adamec, 202.

²⁹Kovalenko, 21.

important to note that during the early years of his reign, and until after the Second World War, his policies were controlled by his uncles. This is normal in Islamic societies; something that westerners often do not realize.³⁰ Afghanistan's problems during the years leading up to the Second World War continued to be dominated by tribal disharmony. These problems were especially acute along the Indian border. Domestically, during the early years of Mohammad Zahir's reign, unrest was the result of policies which stressed Pathan nationalism. These measures included institutionalizing the Pashto language as a vehicle of mobilization as opposed to the traditional use of Persian.³¹ Afghan modernization continued to be an important aspect for the new regime. In order to accomplish modernization, some source of external assistance was necessary.

A key priority was the creation of a sophisticated military establishment. Development programs also involved the construction of irrigation facilities, educational institutions, and modern medical installations. . . The government needed external assistance for all these undertakings. Hashim Khan (the Prime Minister) did not want to commit himself to a single regional country, or to countries that appeared to have an interest in Afghan affairs. He therefore avoided offers by the Soviet Union and Britain and turned instead to Germany. Germany in 1935 was dominated by Adolf Hitler. . . as Hitler endeavored to spread his influence into the Middle East and South Asia, Afghanistan's request for aid was quickly acknowledged.³²

At the outset of the war Afghanistan stood challenged to remain non-aligned and neutral or face loss of sovereignty by invasion and and possible partition by the Soviets and British, fighting against the Nazis.

³⁰Dupree, Ch 22 discusses the benefits of this type of rule and particularly how it applied to Mohammad Zahir's reign.

³¹Interview with Professor Eden Nabi, 18 March 1986. Prof. Nabi discussed how Ethno-Linguistic policies in Afghanistan have plagued various leaders and how the Soviets have used Nationality Policies to co-opt various groups to support or at least not challenge their position in Afghanistan since 1979.

³²Ziring, 50.

Faced with undesirable alternatives, it was an easy matter for the Afghan government to expel all German citizens when demanded.

In summary, the inter war years for Afghanistan marked the nations emergence from the isolation of the 'Great Game' played by the Russians and the British. American interests remained unmoved towards a land, distant and isolated, which offered few opportunities. The Soviet Union's interests toward Afghanistan during this period were dominated by their own internal challenges of consolidating gains and 'building communism in one nation'. Joseph Collins describes Soviet-Afghan relations during these years as "cordial, pragmatic, state-to-state relations, quite obviously oriented toward keeping the southern border free of turbulence and instability, while keeping Great Britain from using Afghanistan as a base for operations against the USSR."³³ There is little evidence during this period to make one believe that Soviet intentions long term were to dominate and launch a campaign of world domination from their southern flank. Soviet interests throughout this time frame were primarily defensive in nature, conditioned by their experiences during the Russian Civil War and in World War Two. And finally, British interest had taken on a totally new character, driven primarily by their loss of influence in India by the formerly unchallenged Raj.

While during the Second World War Afghanistan gave into the wishes of the Allies by expelling Nazis, Afghan isolation was a pragmatic course that guaranteed neutrality during the war.

³³Collins, 13.

Neutrality in South Asia was critical to both the Soviet Union and Britain who were more than sufficiently occupied with fighting elsewhere. Afghanistan did not play a similar role as Iran in the resupply and maintenance of lines of communication because of its remote geographic position. However, had Afghanistan gone to the Axis powers and had the Axis powers been able to use Afghan territory for an operational base, the history of British India and Soviet Central Asia might have been quite different.³⁴

The Second World War is an important period to this study because it marks the end of American isolationism and the beginning of a new era in American interest in World Order issues. As a measure of war time expansion onto the world scene, an American diplomatic legation was established in Kabul in 1942. It was subsequently upgraded to the status of an Embassy in 1948.³⁵ Unlike the history of Iran in the Second World War, Afghanistan seems to have stood still during this period, emerging into a different type of world power balance after the war. As the United States and the Soviet Union drew the battle lines of the 'Cold War', Afghanistan returned to its role as a buffer state between new powers playing a new 'Great Game'. The next section will examine the development of Soviet and American interests in Afghanistan during the cold war period.

³⁴In reality, it is quite doubtful that the Afghans would have been able to support Axis presence early in the war because of the vigilance of the British and Soviets. This fact is especially obvious, once the 1941 Anglo-Soviet invasion of Iran is considered. This invasion and the subsequent stationing of allied troops, virtually cut Afghanistan off from the rest of the world. Adamec, Ch 8, discusses the WWII period and Afghan capabilities.

³⁵Adamec, 263.

C. From Cold War to Detente: Afghanistan in the Balance

The end of the Second World War brought with it the greatest change in United States Foreign policy and position on the international scene in history. No longer was the US to hide behind the isolation of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Instead the US would assume a role as a leader in World Politics. The end of the war also marked a major change in South Asia. Great Britain, suffering from the losses it incurred during the war and pressured by the voice of nationalism, withdrew from the extension of the empire it had built in the 1800s. In 1947, Great Britain formally recognized the independence of its South Asian holdings. India was partitioned into a Hindu and Muslim homeland. The end of the Second World War also heralded the end of the Grand Alliance between the Soviet Union, Britain and the United States. This section will trace the development of US and Soviet interest in Afghanistan from a period of intense conflict during the Cold War to the relaxation of tension during the era of Detente. Since 1945 the conflict and confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union has remained a central issue of international politics. Against this background on the world scene, Afghanistan struggled to maintain its national integrity.

The post war period reveals three main goals of Afghan foreign policy; non-alignment, independence and development.¹ Afghanistan's foreign relations were complicated, as in the past, by internal politics and traditional disagreements over her eastern borders. Irredentism

¹Collins, 17.

over the newly-created North West Frontier Province in Pakistan, and the fate of those Pathan tribesmen residing there, factored into the course of external relations throughout this period. As with so many other nations in the post war world, development figured to be a major goal for Afghanistan. Development meant catching up with the rest of the world; be it east or west did not matter to Afghanistan's rulers. Development meant relations with the north-the Soviet Union-and this in turn led to the infusion of unwanted Marxist Socialism as a new form of political expression.²

An analysis of the chronology of Great Powers relations with Afghanistan during this era reveals four distinct periods: (1) 1945-47; a period of idealism following the defeat of the Axis forces. (2) 1947-53; drawing the Cold War battle lines and Afghanistan's exclusion from the Western camp. (3) 1953-63; a distinct period of tilting to the Soviets, and (4) 1963-73; A continued struggle for independence but a period of inclusion into the Soviet sphere. The evolution of Soviet influence in Afghanistan could be described as setting the hook between 1953-63 and snagging the fish between 1963-73. In 1973, a military coup against the constitutional monarchy marked the beginning of the end of Afghan independence.

During the period from the end of the war until the partition of India in 1947, US policy toward Afghanistan was characterized by the idealism of the post war era. Immediately after the war the US was concerned primarily with reconstruction and consolidation, primarily in

²Adamec, 263.

Europe. Afghanistan was too far away and of little significance. For instance, the ~~New York Times Index~~ for 1946 shows no entries at all for Afghanistan. The Marshall Plan and Truman Doctrine, instruments of US concern for the post-war world dealt with Europe and the Northern Tier. Afghanistan was at the extreme eastern edge of the Northern Tier and in US eyes retained its former position as a buffer state.³

Afghanistan, idealistically, saw the United States as a new power capable of influencing its relations with both the Soviets and the British. This was the era of the idealism; the formation of the United Nations was supposed to prevent another great war from occurring. Afghanistan petitioned the United Nations for admission in July 1946. US sources characterized this request as "just routine because of her pivotal position in the land defense of India. . .and because of the current battle for influence between Great Britain and the Soviet Union." The British were concerned, as they had always been , about the state of Soviet-Afghan relations following a minor settlement between Afghanistan and the Soviets over water rights.⁴ Afghanistan's leaders believed in the philosophy embodied in the newly created United Nations. So much so that in August 1946, the Afghan Premier, Mahamoud Khan Ghazi, is quoted as saying. . .

I am convinced that America's championship of the small nations guarantees my country's security against aggression. . .America's attitude is our salvation. . .For the first time in our history we are free of the threat of great powers' using our

³Kuniholm, 299.

⁴"Afghanistan Asks Admission to UN", New York Times, 6 July 1946, p3.

mountain passes as pathways to empire. Now we can concentrate our talents and resources on bettering the living conditions of our own people.⁵

The Soviet Union during this period was occupied by a series of seemingly more important tasks. First, the need to rebuild, after years of war, took intense effort and became the Soviet priority. Most of the Soviet Union's attention in the foreign policy realm was directed towards the countries of East Europe, where the process of building Peoples Democracies was underway. Soviet attention was focused at transforming the countries where it had occupation forces. Furthermore, they came into conflict with the United States over Greece and Azerbaijan in the Northern Tier, leaving Afghanistan on the peripheral edge of concern. Under Stalin the Soviets adopted a 'two-camp' theory. This theory assumed that Afghanistan, as one of the independent states of Asia and the Middle East, was a puppet of the imperialist Western powers and not able to formulate its own policy.⁶ Since Soviet attention was focused elsewhere, Afghanistan continued a course of friendly, yet cautious relations with the Soviet Union. Afghanistan was content to try for the attention and assistance of the west in its development scheme.

After the start of the Cold War, the idealism of the early years following the end of the Second World War faded. The partition of India marked the end of British influence in South Asia. The legacy of the British Raj remained prominent on the Indian sub-continent, but their presence was gone. America, as the first super power, stood

⁵"Afghan Premier to reduce Army", New York Times, 9 August 1946, p5.

⁶Collins, 18.

ready to step into the vacuum of British influence. As such, the United States took up a policy to "contain the expansion of Soviet and Communist influence on a global basis. Containment policy, as adopted by the United States, meant drawing the line beyond which Communist influence would not advance. The objective was to restore the balance of power and status quo throughout Europe and Asia.

There were two ways to accomplish the objectives of Containment policy. One way was to establish a so called "perimeter defense" which held all "rimlands" in equal importance. The other method, as George Kennan suggested, was a strongpoint defense. A strongpoint defense meant that the US would actively employ limited defense resources "where they can serve most effectively to bring production, freedom, and confidence back to the world". A strongpoint defense required that the Administration make important decisions about where the most critical need existed. It assumed that all American interests are not equal and that the US "could tolerate the loss of peripheral areas provided that this did not impair its ability to defend those that were vital." Kennan indicated that the main method for deciding vital from peripheral interests . . . "was, of course, the presence of industrial-military capacity, together with necessary sources of raw materials and secure lines of communication."⁷

In implementation this policy required that US priority go to the protection of European and Japanese reconstruction efforts, since that is where the potential was located according to the

⁷ John L. Gaddis, Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 56-60.

Administration. With the exception of US efforts during the Azerbaijan Crisis, under the auspices of the United Nations, American priority remained in these areas. Since most of South Asia did not meet the Administration's definition of a critical area, the loss to Soviet control was not viewed as an immediate danger to US security. US point defense in Asia centered on "selected island strongpoints-Japan, Okinawa, the Philippines- while avoiding potentially debilitating commitments on the mainland."⁸

US interests were further challenged by the start of the Korean War. The North Korean attack served to awaken the Administration to the need for an all out perimeter defense. But the US for the time being was occupied with another war. NSC-68, while effectively changing the strong-point defense concept, did not change US commitments toward Afghanistan.

Afghanistan fell outside an area of interest, since it was a buffer to the Soviet Union and in the undeveloped area of South West Asia. In the former British sphere of influence, the United States only pretended to fill the vacuum. Despite the American lack of interest, Afghanistan sought to develop relations with the United States. America was the first country approached for military assistance after the war. Newell writes that the US turned down the bid because it might have been a provocation to the Soviet Union,⁹ an excuse that has been used for Pakistan many times since.

⁸Gaddis, 60.

⁹Newell, 51.

Meantime, traditional problems took precedence over international politics. Afghanistan was the only member nation of the United Nations to vote against Pakistan's admission to the United Nation on the grounds that. . ."the people of the North West Frontier Province had not had a fair plebiscite to determine their relationship with the new Moslem state. . .they had lacked an opportunity 'free from any kind of influence' to choose between independence or becoming part of Pakistan"¹⁰ Although a plebiscite was allowed in the NWFP, it concerned whether the province should become a member of Pakistan or remain an Indian State.

On Afghanistan's part, it appeared that the West and especially the United States was a preferred partner to the Soviet Union. Afghan leaders viewed the United States as the most reliable partner. In 1948, Kabul placed \$30 million worth of construction contracts for roads and dams with an Idaho construction firm. Contrary to a popular belief in the United States at the time, this was done without the benefit of US Post War Relief funds, as in many other nations. Kabul paid for most of its improvement projects through the sale of karakul sheepskins, leading to the conclusion that. . ."the country's financial position as analogous to that of a poor man who lives within his income and has money in the bank. In other words. . .the country is a good risk."¹¹ According to the same report Afghanistan was also characterized as not being a receptive climate for communist ideology and her relations with the Soviet Union as guarded and on an extremely practical basis.

¹⁰"Pakistan, Yemen Admitted To U.N.", New York Times, 1 October 1947, p5.

¹¹"Afghan Sentiment Said to Favor U.S.", New York Times, 27 November 1949, p 8.

Later reports discussed Soviet pressure on the government of Afghanistan as subtle and difficult to detect. While Soviet propaganda continued to be intense in the European sphere, it was obvious that Asia was also a target of expansionist aims. At one point it was rumored that the Soviets were applying pressure to Afghanistan to admit just as many Russians as Americans to their kingdom.¹²

Soviet interest, after their forced withdrawal from Azerbaijan, was mostly directed toward the Pushtunistan issue. In 1949, the issue of autonomy for the 6 to 7 million Pathan tribesmen living in the Pakistani North West Frontier Province began to heat up. This issue dominated reports on Afghanistan and Pakistan in US news sources. The Soviets were interested in supporting a separatist movement. As such, they began to develop relations with the Afghans, offering them a four year trade agreement. After Pakistan closed the Afghan-Pakistan border, Afghan leaders had no other avenue to development than to the north—the Soviet Union. According to Thomas Hammond. . .

This has often caused Afghanistan to seek Soviet aid. The Soviets have, of course, been happy to support Afghanistan against Pakistan since Pakistan is a friend of the United States. After border clashes in 1950, Pakistan closed the frontier; during the next five years, trade between Afghanistan and the USSR increased by 50 percent. This turn toward the Soviet Union gained further impetus when the United States refused to give arms to Afghanistan, but chose instead to send military aid to Pakistan. . .¹³

The year 1953 marked a distinct change in the policy of the Soviet Union towards Afghanistan. Two events, which heralded this change, were the death of Stalin and King Zahir's appointment of his cousin and brother-in-law, Daoud, as Prime Minister. Stalin's death meant the end

¹²New York Times, 29 October 1947, p22 and 25 October 1948, p10.

¹³Hammond, 24.

of the Two-Camp theory in relations with Third World nations. According to Adam Ulam, Stalin's foreign policies had "created an air of tension" and that his successors felt that a new series of policies were needed.¹⁴ His death therefore marked the emergence of a new period in Soviet foreign relations. Daoud, on the other hand, is characterized as an efficient, "enlightened, forward looking administrator who built up the economy and expanded education". Under his guidance, Afghanistan turned to the Soviet Union and established closer ties economically and militarily. The aim of these actions was development. In 1954, Afghanistan appealed again for US military assistance. Kabul was refused, and this triggered a set of circumstances which were to ultimately bring Afghanistan into the Soviet sphere.¹⁵

In Washington, the strategy of containment had turned to the age of coalitions. In April 1954, the US signed mutual defense pacts with Turkey and Pakistan. The South East Treaty Organization (SEATO) was established in September 1954, and included Pakistan. The objective of this treaty was to stop Communist gains in Southeast Asia through mutual aid. In 1955, the Baghdad Pact was created, seeking a defensive agreement in the Middle East. Turkey and Pakistan both joined. The Baghdad Pact later became known as CENTO (Central Treaty Organization) and was supported by the United States.

Afghanistan was not a member of any of these organizations. First, because any outside treaties were prohibited by the 1931

¹⁴Ulam, Expansion and Co-existence, 543.

¹⁵Hammond, 25.

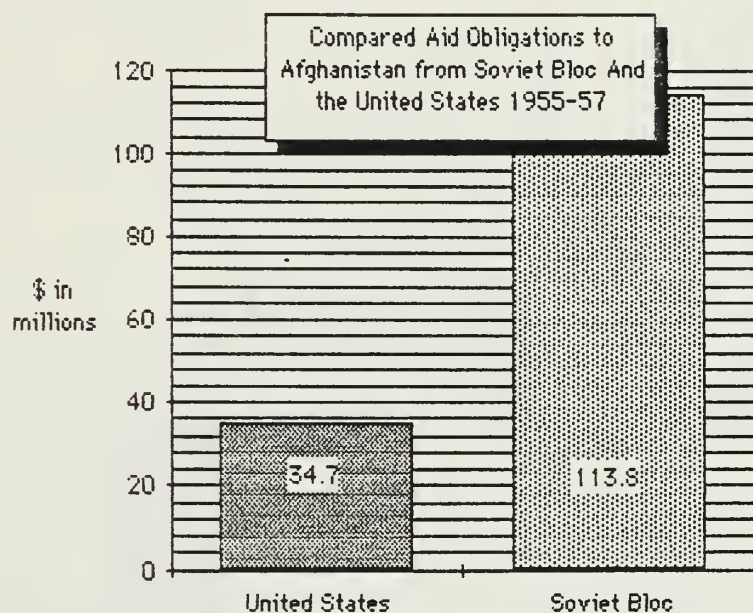
Nonaggression Treaty with the Soviet Union. Second, due to Afghanistan's position in South West Asian politics. As described by Alfred Monks. . ."This strengthening of Pakistan (referring to Pakistan's inclusion in the US scheme of Mutual Defense Treaties) was viewed in Afghanistan as weakening Afghanistan's power, which, in turn reduced the possibility that Pakistan would come to terms with Afghanistan over the border question."¹⁶ When Pathan tribesmen on the border began to agitate for reform, Pakistan responded by border closure across the NWFP and Baluchistan. With the border closed and Afghanistan's major route to the ocean and export facilities eliminated, the only option was to turn to the north for assistance. The Soviets gladly responded.

It would be totally unfair to the US position to not examine fully the issue of aid. While the Soviets stepped in with a series of programs, the United States still continued to provide some assistance, primarily economic in nature. In 1954, Afghanistan concluded a \$5 million deal with Czechoslovakia for cement plants, a textile mill, a leather processing plant, and road building equipment. Kabul also concluded agreements with the USSR for grain elevators, oil storage tanks, road building equipment, concrete mixing facilities and hydroelectric stations. US programs were initiated under the Mutual Security Program and were designed for Education, Agriculture, Community Development, and Health (in order of funding for FY 1955).¹⁷ The tables below

¹⁶Alfred L. Monks, The Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan, (Washington D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1981), 12.

¹⁷Charles Wolf, Jr., Foreign Aid: Theory and Practice in South Asia, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1960), Tables 19, 24, 27, and 38.

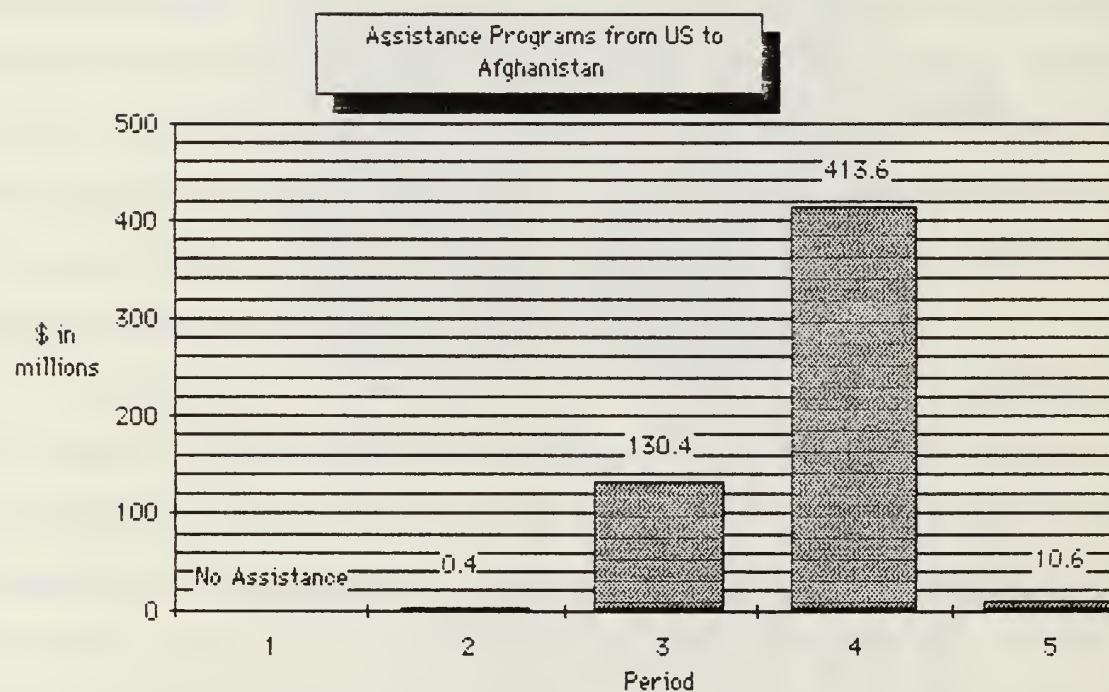
compare US to Soviet bloc aid programs and show the trends of US assistance to Afghanistan compared to other South West Asian nations during the same period.



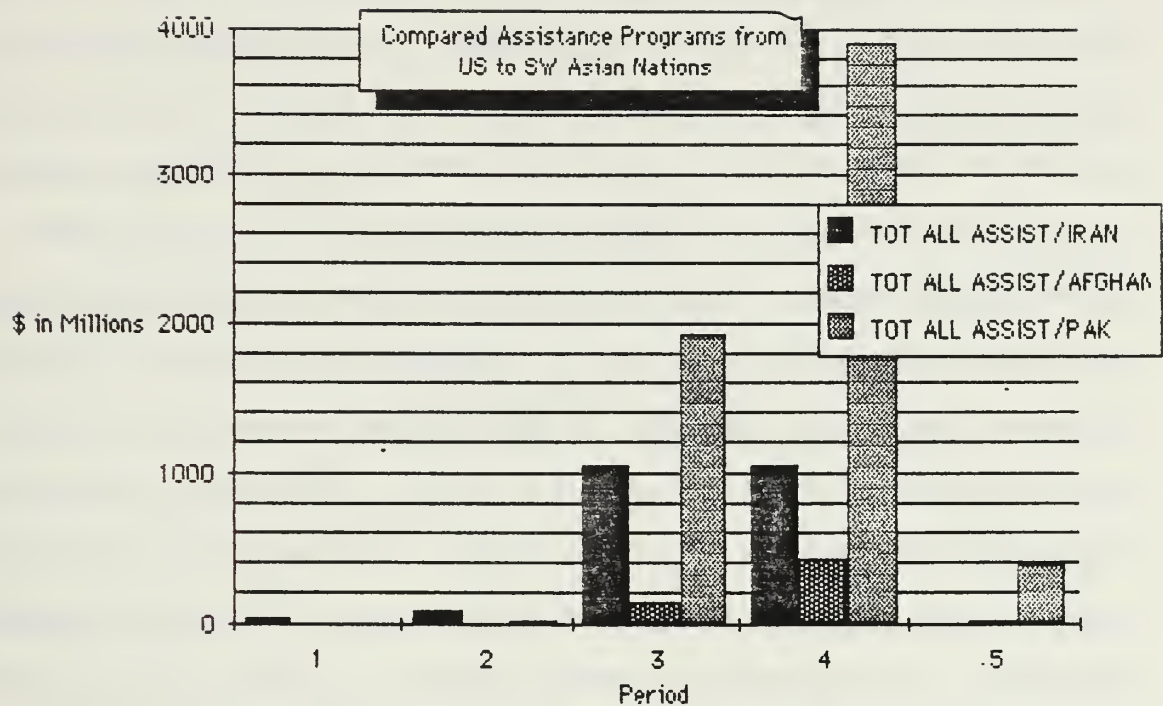
Source Foreign Aid Theory and Practice in South Asia, Wolf. p390

In the following graphs, the periods are as listed below:

- (1) 1946-1948 Post War Relief
- (2) 1949-1952 Marshall Plan Period
- (3) 1953-1961 Mutual Security Pact Period
- (4) 1962-1978 Foreign Assistance Act Period
- (5) 1979-1982 Post Revolutionary-Post Invasion Period



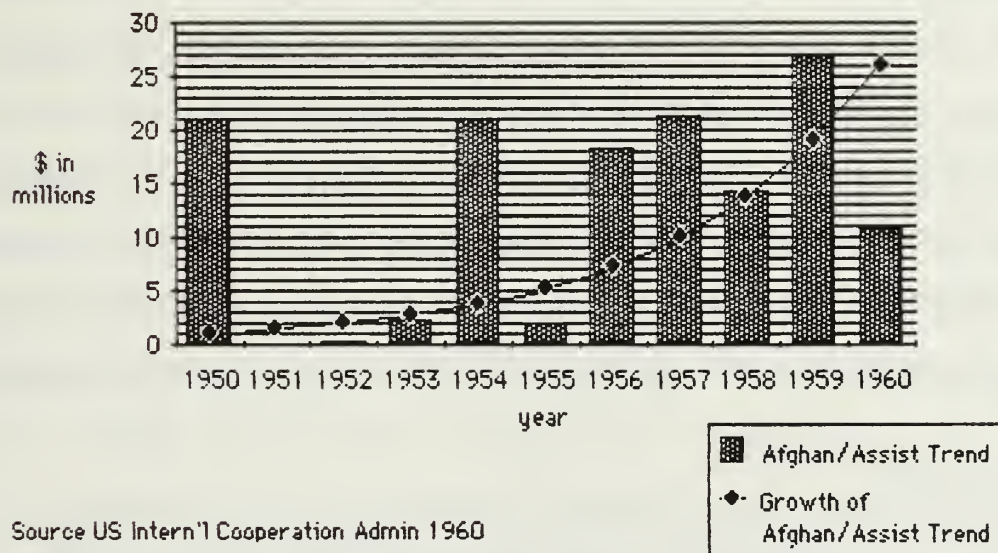
Source: US Overseas Loans and Grants, Office of Planning and Budgeting US AID, 1982



Source: US Overseas Loans and Grants, Office of Planning and Budgeting USAID, 1982

The graph below details a by year analysis of US Assistance programs to Afghanistan and their growth factor between 1950 and 1960.

Afghan/Assist Trend



Source US Intern'l Cooperation Admin 1960

Despite American limited efforts to provide developmental assistance funds, Afghanistan remained on the outer edge of US national security efforts in the Middle East or South West Asia. The Soviets provided equally appealing long term loans, in greater quantities and repayable in terms of Afghan agricultural produce. According to Alfred Monks, Afghan acceptance of Soviet aid in large quantities led to an opinion in the United States that Afghanistan had become a Soviet satellite. Speculation extended to the political orientation of Afghan military officers trained in the Soviet Union. Afghanistan continued a non-aligned, neutral line of foreign policy. "Yet, the American concern was justified, since Soviet military assistance to Afghanistan during that period was extensive; by 1973 it amounted to about \$1.5 billion, far surpassing that from the United States to China."¹⁸

By 1961 the issue again became a concern between Pakistan and Afghanistan. It continued for eighteen months with sporadic fighting and ambushes along the border between the two states. Depending upon the source, the Prime Minister, Daoud, was either dismissed or resigned in an effort to resolve the border dispute. The King felt that with Daoud in control, Afghanistan had tilted too close to the Soviets, and had come too close to beginning a war with Pakistan over the Pushtunistan issue. In March 1963, Daoud was gone, and Afghanistan normalized relations with Pakistan.¹⁹ However, Daoud did initiate

¹⁸Monks, 14.

¹⁹Dupree, 554. is the strongest supporter of Daoud's actions as Primer. While Collins, 23. Hammond, 25 and Rubinstein, 132. are less inclined to give Daoud credit for progressive actions in the interest of the Afghan nation. Dupree reports more from first hand experience, having written extensively on Afghanistan from 1950 - 1971.

extensive development plans, domestically and open ties with the great powers, especially with the Soviet Union. Moscow's policy of Peaceful Co-existence with states of differing political systems eased the way for the opening of relations.

Soviet policy during the 1953-1963 time frame had achieved its goals. Afghanistan had remained outside the Western camp and had become increasingly dependent upon Soviet sources. In the Constitutional Monarchy time frame which followed, when Afghanistan attempted to be more western in orientation, Soviet-Afghan ties continued to be important. Soviet leaders could point to Afghanistan, proudly, and use it as an example of how Third World nations could profit by relations with a communist nation. "Indeed, from Moscow's perspective, . . . Afghanistan was a showplace for Soviet salesmanship in the Third World. . . and Afghanistan's heavy dependence on Soviet economic, technical and military assistance permitted a degree of penetration unmatched anywhere else in the Third World, without seeming to jeopardize its independence."²⁰

According to Joseph Collins, the most successful aspect of Soviet policy in this period was public relations. Soviet leaders could brag about how closely they related with Afghanistan's leaders and how the Afghans shared the Soviet line of thinking on international tensions. When the Shah of Iran decided in 1962 not to allow the US to base missiles in his country, "An Izvestiia correspondent with a talent for exaggeration even attributed the Shah of Iran's decision. . . to a visit

²⁰Rubinstein, 133.

the Shah made to Afghanistan. 'he was able to see. . .the fruitfulness of that country's good-neighbor relations with the Soviet Union and to ascertain that the policy of peaceful coexistence. . .is bolstered everyday. . ."²¹ Afghanistan was compared to Finland in its wisdom of maintaining a policy of good relations with its northern neighbor.

Soviet policy tended to remain quiet and discrete about action in the South West Asian region. The Soviets preferred to be seen as a friendly and honorable neighbor. When Pakistan went to war with India in 1965 and 1971 the Soviets preferred to be seen as the peacemakers, inviting the combatants to Tashkent for negotiations. When Afghanistan suffered internal problems after the king issued a constitution in 1964 and through the series of internal riots, and five prime ministers, the Soviets stood by the sidelines quietly biding their time. It was critical to the Soviet position to remain quiet because of the continued trouble with China after the Sino-Soviet rift, the series of mutual defensive alliances the US had created in Asia and the Middle East, and because of their own fears, having not yet achieved nuclear parity with the United States. Even after achieving nuclear parity, roughly in 1965, the Soviets remained quiet on the Central Asian front. Their fears were exacerbated and attention diverted by the 1969 Sino-Soviet border clashes and 1972 Sino-US rapprochement.

Soviet-Afghan relations continued to grow warmly, even though the king preferred the United States. Soviet assistance projects and military training of Afghan officers in the Soviet Union increased.

²¹Collins, 25.

Additionally, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union seemed to agree on international issues. "During the period 1963-1973, the Afghans voiced support or concern at one time or another for: general disarmament, the progress of de-colonization, Soviet policy toward the Vietnam war, and Soviet policy toward the Arab-Israeli dispute."²²

In stark comparison, US interest in Afghanistan continued to remain distant. Assistance programs increased after the Mutual Security Pact period in 1962 and in the early stages in the Foreign Assistance Act, (see figures above) but, as Vietnam increasingly occupied the minds of US decision makers, assistance quantities began to slow. From the Gulf of Tonkin incident in 1964, through the commitment of US combat troops in 1965 and the 1968 TET Offensive and turbulent domestic unrest in America, US policy slowly began to change. Under the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, US policy had tended to take on global commitments and become universalistic. The change of American interest in global commitments, so intensely shaped by the Vietnam war, was announced by President Nixon, in July 1969 in his Guam speech.²³ The Nixon Doctrine held that the US would maintain all treaty obligations and provide a nuclear umbrella, but at lower levels US troops would not be committed in favor of economic assistance. In South West Asia this meant that Iran would be the 'Island of Stability' for US interests; Afghanistan in no way figured into the equation.

²²Collins, 27.

²³Gaddis, 298.

The US interest towards Afghanistan remained oriented only toward humanitarian causes. It was generally recognized that Afghanistan had a relationship with the Soviet Union which inhibited American interests from developing further. According to the US Ambassador to Afghanistan, Robert G. Neuman. . .

The United States has long understood that Afghanistan has had little choice but to have close relations with the Soviet Union. Among the factors are: the long border, the slowly developing desire to transform the economy and concomitant need for massive economic assistance; the decision to have a modern military force; and the intermittent preoccupation with its quarrels with Pakistan. The Soviets responded to these opportunities and since 1953 they have assiduously exploited the situation and developed a strong position here with considerable and growing influence and leverage.²⁴

In relations with the Soviet Union, under the Nixon Administration, a distinct change came about with the advent of Detente. To the American administration, Detente supposedly meant the relaxation of international tensions, specifically with the Soviet Union, and specifically with the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT I) as a background for reducing the proclivity for going to nuclear war. To the Nixon Administration, relations with the Soviet Union and building upon the "restraint, reciprocity and rhetoric" incumbent in the process of Detente, became an important, if not over-riding, goal.²⁵ Whether or not Detente was the major goal of Washington's "Sovietocentric" policies during the Nixon/Kissinger time frame is not the subject of this argument. However, it is important to recognize that the strategy used by the Administration was an attempt to deal with the Soviets on the basis of negotiations, which would convince the Soviets to modify their

²⁴Airgram no. A-71 from Kabul to Department of State, 26 June 1971, p 4-5 concerning the Ambassador's Annual Policy Review. Quoted in Hammond, 27.

²⁵Adam Ulam, Dangerous Relations, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 140.

behavior.²⁶ The effect of this strategy on US interests in Afghanistan is two fold. First, since Afghanistan remained beyond the direct sphere of US influence, American concerns were peripheral. Second, if a Great Power controversy over this area did occur, the US tactic would have been to attempt to talk the Soviets into a solution rather than by any action, further evidence of the non-vital nature of Afghanistan in the eyes of the Administration.

This period in the history of Afghanistan's relations with the great powers closed in 1973 with the end of the constitutional monarchy. In summary, there are several factors which stand out during this time frame. First, for Afghanistan, the legacy of turmoil in domestic politics continued as it had since the creation of an independent state in the 1700s. In her foreign relations, irredentism over the issue of Pushtunistan or the Pakistani continued. The primary Afghan interest throughout these years continued to be that of development, while retaining a non-aligned, independent position vis-a-vis the international political situation. Catching up meant just developing to the level of the Second World, not the Western mainstream. Conditions being what they were, once the door to US assistance, which the Afghans believed to be the best way up, was closed, there was little hesitation about accepting closer ties with the Soviet Union.

From the Soviet perspective, the policy of peaceful co-existence and cordial relations with Third world nations allowed aid to flow

²⁶Gaddis, 298.

unencumbered by any ideological ties. It was sufficient for the Soviets to lure Afghanistan away from the Western "imperialist" camp. There would be sufficient opportunity for ideological orientation at a later time. From the Afghan perspective this was a distinct change from the immediate post war era, when "a community of interest existed between Afghanistan and the United States; both powers wanted to see the Soviet Union contained."²⁷ During the Daoud era the spark of development had lit a desire to be like the rest of the world. The source of aid mattered little.

From the US perspective, despite Afghanistan's geographically strategic position, this nation continued to remain on the fringe of American interests. In the immediate post war era, America was concerned with idealism and the formation of the United Nations to insure world peace. As the superpowers drew the Cold War battle lines and two great coalitions were formed, the United States showed little interest in Afghanistan --even when Afghanistan attempted to draw closer to the United States. Only when it appeared that Azerbaijan was about to be absorbed into the Soviet Union did US concerns for Iran become important. But Iran was a separate case from Afghanistan. The Truman Doctrine did not apply as far east as this nation. US policy, to contain the Soviets, changed in form several times in the post war era. Each change saw no improved position for Afghanistan. In terms of defense, economic and world order level interests, Afghanistan never figured into any American equation. The

²⁷Adamec, 263.

US extended assistance to Afghanistan only in hope of forestalling any tilt toward the Soviet camp. Whether one analyzes Afghanistan's position using the orthodox or revisionist argument for the post-war orientation of US national security policy, both frameworks lead to the same conclusion in this case. Afghanistan was a peripheral interest for the United States.

The Soviet position was perhaps the most opportunistic. As Afghanistan tilted toward the Soviet camp, Soviet interests were secured. Defensively, a non-aligned Afghanistan was the perfect non-aligned neighbor. Once initial economic links were established the Soviets derived the benefits that aid created. Aid was a cheap source of influence, and the Soviets benefitted from a source of import for natural gas and produce. In terms of Soviet ideology, Afghanistan provided the perfect example for the Third World of the advances to be made by relationships with a socialist nation. Legally, Afghanistan had no option other than maintaining relations with the Soviets as dictated by the 1931 Treaty of Neutrality and Nonaggression. The Soviets were therefore in the best position to gain from a relationship. After the Sino-Soviet split, and especially following the outbreak of hostilities in 1969, Afghanistan became more important to the Soviet Third World position and the Soviets sought to guard their gains in Afghanistan.

D. Death of a Monarchy and the Communist Seizure of Power; 1973-1978

By 1972 King Zahir's attempts at developing an effective democratic constitutional monarchy had reached their limits. A series of governments under various Prime Ministers had come to power and failed. Even though the new constitution, signed into effect in 1964, allowed greater freedoms for political activity and freedom of the press, competition for power had "created a variety of political groups with conflicting conceptions of a desirable political order".¹ In December 1972, King Zahir installed the fifth Prime Minister in a series since Daoud's departure, Moosa Shafiq. He was believed to be the King's last and best chance at making the new system work. But the new leader's actions were too little, too late. On 17 July, 1973 Daoud returned to power via a military coup, supported by a band of leftist military officers.² For the superpowers, this was the beginning of a new era of competition in the grand old legacy of the 'Great Game'; whether or not they wanted to play. This section will trace the development of American and Soviet National Interests in Afghanistan, from Daoud's coup in April 1973 until after his fall from power by another in the long series of forceful takeovers in Afghanistan's history.

The goal of Daoud's return was, in his words, to establish "a republican system, consistent with the true spirit of Islam. . .to

¹ Hannah Negaran (pseudonym), "Afghanistan: A Marxist Regime in a Muslim Society", Current History, (April, 1979), 172.

² Henry S. Bradsher, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, (Durham, N.C.: Duke Press Policy Series, 1983), 52-57.

establish a real democracy to serve the majority of the people. . .", to rid the society of the king's "corrupt system. . .based on. . .personal and class interests, intrigues and demagoguery"³ According to Dupree, one of Daoud's main goals was to save the nation from economic ruin. Even though many of the Traditional religious leaders may not have completely believed in the coup, they did respect Daoud for his previous performance as the Prime Minister from 1953 until his dismissal in 1963. Like religious leaders in Iran, Afghan Modernist and Traditionalist religious leaders were weary of outside influence in their country and Daoud offered some hope that these influences would be lessened and that he would be able to rectify the deepening economic problems.⁴ Daoud's return could be called a classic example of a military coup. A series of elements existed which almost predestined success: "disaffection with the existing regime by key elements of the population, his own correct perception of the government's vulnerability to overthrow, secure advance planning by the conspirators, and assurances by the military that the nations armed forces would either remain neutral or support the coup."⁵

There were a number of factors which helped Daoud in his bid for power. First, the overall weakness of the 'democratic' regime. Second, the lack of any real option for the Afghan people in the way of political parties or cross-cultural/cross-tribal organizations, by which the people could have developed any "appreciation of truly national

³Hammond quotes a series of statements, messages and Press interviews in which Daoud announced his assumption of power, p36.

⁴Dupree, 755- 760.

⁵Arnold, 55.

problems and inculcated in the people loyalties beyond the immediate calls of family and tribe." Afghanistan remained a society dominated by tribes with little or no nationalistic base. And third, Daoud was carried to power by the support of two critical groups; young military officers, some or many of whom had been trained in the Soviet Union and a coalition of factions of the Communist party of Afghanistan, the PDPA (Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan).⁶

Daoud was highly regarded by the armed forces because of his concern for the nation, for his support of the Baluch and Pashtu nationalists in Pakistan, and for his initiation of economic development projects. The members of the Parchamis and Khalq, the factions of the Communist Party, looked favorably to Daoud because of his increased volume of military and economic relations with the Soviet Union, combined with his attitude toward economic development and support of the public sector of the economy.⁷ It was his connection with the Communist Party which raised the greatest amount of speculation that the Soviet Union was behind the destabilization of the Afghan Constitutional monarchy. Speculation also extends to the Soviet role in the entire coup, but allegations are difficult to prove except to note that the Soviets were the first foreign government to acknowledge the new Afghan government.

Although Anthony Arnold traces the PDPA movement back to the late 1930s and 1940s during the days of the 'Young Afghan Movement',

⁶Arnold, 56-58. On this topic Arnold agrees with a number of other scholars, unlike some of the other issues he discusses in his analysis of the Soviet Perspective of the Afghan Invasion. Also see Dupree, 753-768. Bradsher 53-59

⁷Megaran, 173.

the party did not get its start until 1963, under the guiding hand of Nur Mohammed Taraki. Taraki would later have a key part to play in the April Revolution which ousted Daoud. The PDPA was officially formed in 1965. Again, speculation exists as to whether Daoud was chosen by the PDPA factions to be their figurehead leader, or, in reverse, whether it was Daoud's scheme supported by middle ranking-military officers who were also PDPA members.⁸ The Khalq and Percham factions argued that Afghanistan's economic problems were caused by "her feudal economic structure and concentration of wealth in the hands of the Landlords and capitalists". Therefore, they felt the only possible solution was a proletarian revolution. The concept of Class struggle also extended to the global level, the US being identified as leader of the capitalist camp. The DPM (Democratic Party of the Masses or Khalq) argued that Afghanistan should continue to side with the Soviets.⁹ Despite speculation among analysts, the PDPA did help bring Daoud to power and maintain legitimacy-domestically and externally with the Soviets—at least during the first two years of his regime.

The support of the PDPA later factored into Daoud's downfall. Two years later, in 1975, Daoud began to replace or shuffle leftist officials with members his family and officers loyal to himself. This, in turn, caused the PDPA to seek Daoud's removal. A number of additional

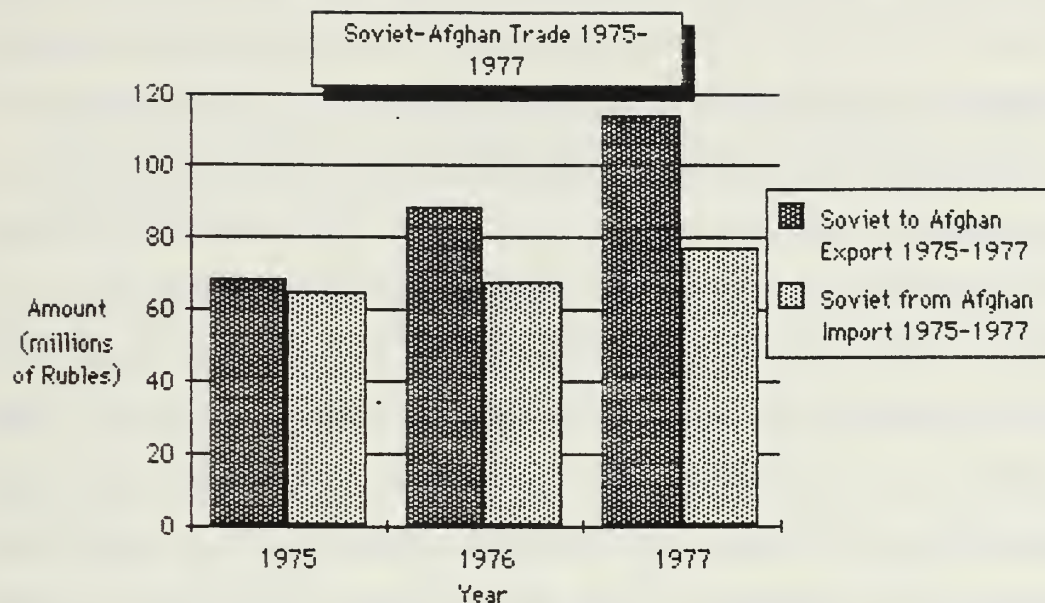
⁸Negaran, 173 charges that "Like Egyptian officers in a similar situation, the Perchami and Khalqi officers apparently selected a suitable figure head for their coup. A number of other scholars including Bradsher and Collins believe that it was the other way around, that the PDPA members happened to support Daoud who had masterminded the operation through series of 'seminars' he had led since his 1963 departure from government.

⁹Negaran, 173.

considerations may have figured into the equation for the successful Communist seizure of power. Thomas Hammond argues that abolishing the monarchy was a fatal flaw. "Daoud became founder, President, and Prime Minister of the Republic of Afghanistan. Abolishing the monarchy may have been a fatal mistake on Daoud's part. The masses were accustomed to having a king, and the monarchy was one of the few unifying forces in the diverse, loosely organized country."¹⁰ Another possible irritant was the nature of Daoud's regime. He is characterized as an extremely autocratic leader, who refused to allow any disagreement with his track of development. Daoud became increasingly unpopular.

In his foreign policy after the overthrow of the monarchy, Daoud continued cordial relations with the Soviet Union for at least two years. The Soviets hoping to build the bond between the two nations gave the Afghans \$437 million in economic credit in 1975. This was quickly followed, in 1976, with a trade agreement which called for a 65 percent increase in trade by the year 1980. The table below indicates the trade flow between these two nations between 1975 and 1977. Soviet exports consisted of machine and industrial equipment, oil and petroleum products, rolled steel, wheat and sugar. Soviet imports from Afghanistan consisted of natural gas (which decreased from 64.3 million rubles to 29.2), cotton, wool and fruits.

¹⁰Hammond, 36.



Source: Collins, *The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan*, p40

Although relations were fairly good up until 1977, following improvement in ties with Pakistan and Iran, potential for a switch existed which caused concern in the Soviet camp. In 1974 the Shah of Iran tempted Daoud with \$2 billion of economic aid to be disbursed over a ten year period . . .

which would have made Iran Afghanistan's biggest aid donor, replacing the USSR. The most important item of aid was to be the construction of a railroad from Kabul to Iran, which eventually would have provided Afghanistan with a trade route through Iranian ports, thereby decreasing Afghan dependence on Soviet trade.¹¹

In 1975, the Shah of Iran offered to lend, at easy terms, up to \$400 million for a series of small projects. Other regional actors also became involved; Saudi Arabia granted \$10 million and promised a \$55 million interest free loan, Iraq and Kuwait also offered large grants and

¹¹ Hammond, 39.

loans. However, by 1977, Iran was over-extended financially and had to cut back on all aid programs. Any doubts in Moscow of Afghanistan's dependence on the Soviets should have been cast down by this time.¹²

The issue of irredentism over Pushtunistan again briefly rose to prominence after Daoud's return to power in Kabul. Daoud was noted as an outspoken supporter of the independence movement in the Pakistani North West Frontier movement. In 1973, revolts began in the Pakistani province of Baluchistan. Pakistan sent in several Army Divisions to try to quell the disorder and calls for Baluch separatism. Daoud allowed both Baluch and Pathan dissenters to find sanctuary in Afghanistan, with refugee camps just across the border and leaders using Kabul as a planning center. In February 1974, in a French newspaper interview, Daoud argued that. . ."Baluchistan and Pakistan's North West Frontier Province had 'always been an integral part of Afghanistan'. The British, he insisted had severed these regions from Afghan control and sovereignty through unjust and unequal treaties."¹³ However, Daoud came under pressure from Reza Shah and the Soviets.

Both the Soviet Union and Iran had separate but justifiable reasons for seeing Daoud silenced on the Baluch and Pushtu separatist issues. The Shah of Iran was interested in eliminating a source of tension which could launch troubles among the Baluch tribesmen living in his own country. The Soviets, on one hand, were concerned about the state of Detente, not wishing to cause problems for Pakistan, an

¹²Bradsher, 62.

¹³Ziring, 95.

American ally. During this critical time the Soviets did not wish to further complicate a difficult situation.

The extraordinary burst of Soviet activism beginning with the October 1973 Middle East war and culminating in the invasion of Afghanistan was responsible, more than any other factor, for American disillusionment with detente and the subsequent broad decline in U.S.-Soviet relations.¹⁴

And, on the other hand, since Brezhnev's 1969 Asian Collective Security scheme, the Soviet plan had been to soft pedal separatist issues, hoping to compete with China for regional influence in South Asia. One additional factor added to Daoud's final decision ... "Daoud and his advisers finally accepted the fact that it was not in Afghanistan's power to dismember Pakistan and that by pressing the issue they 'played into Soviet hands by increasing Afghan dependence on Soviet aid'".¹⁵ By 1977 Daoud had tilted away from the Soviets and was seeking a relatively more non-aligned approach in Afghan foreign policy.

In his domestic policy, Daoud was slowly losing legitimacy and support by purging members of the left who had supported his bid for power. Members of the PDPA began to plot against Daoud. Additionally, the nation continued to suffer major internal economic problems that added to his unpopularity. An estimated 300,000 workers left Afghanistan to find work in other countries. As one author noted, the number of Afghan workers finding employment in other Gulf States may have been a blessing in disguise, as their wages, transferred back into

¹⁴Francis Fukuyama, The Military Dimension of Soviet Policy in the Third World, (Santa Monica, Ca: Rand Paper Series, February 1984), 1.

¹⁵Rubinstein, 147. For an in depth analysis of the Baluchistan issue centered from the Pakistani and Iranian viewpoint, see Selig S. Harrison, In Afghanistan's Shadow: Baluch Nationalism and Soviet Temptations, (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1981), pp 39, 81, 141-148. Also see Ziring 93-96 and Bradsher, 62-63.

Afghanistan, helped the balance of payments problems by several hundred million dollars per year.¹⁶ By 1978 Daoud had lost the support of most political groups in the nation and his own party, the National Revolutionary Party, had built up virtually no popular following.

In contrast to the domestic nightmare that was developing, Daoud was working hard to open up options for Afghanistan in the non-aligned world. By the beginning of 1978, Daoud had settled the Pushtunistan issue with President Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan. He had traveled to Yugoslavia, Egypt and India for talks about the non-aligned movement. He had opened and sought good relations with Saudi Arabia. Both Arnold and Bradsher describe an incident which supposedly occurred in January 1977, while Daoud was on a trip to Moscow. "In a brief hostile exchange, Brezhnev suddenly challenged Daoud to 'get rid of all those foreign advisors in your country'. Daoud replied coldly that when Afghanistan had no further need of advisors, they all would be asked to leave". . .and added, "Afghans are masters of their own house, and no foreign country could tell them how to run their own affairs." After seeing the look on Brezhnev's face, an aide supposedly whispered that "Daoud had just written his own death warrant".¹⁷ Shortly after a trip to Saudi Arabia in April 1978, Daoud was overthrown in one of the most bloody coups in Afghanistan to date.

On 27 April, 1978 a coup d'etat liquidated the entire Daoud family and heralded a new era in Afghan politics. In contrast to Daoud's coup, in 1973 that could be described as relatively bloodless, the April

¹⁶Negaran, 173.

¹⁷Bradsher, 66. Arnold, 64. Also see Hammond and Collins for various interpretations.

Revolution was "perhaps one of the most violent uprisings in the less industrialized world. The fighting lasting for 36 hours."¹⁸ Rather than the traditional form of one man, strongarm tactics, a quasi-communist coalition came to power. Analysts differ in describing the new regime. Arnold, taking the hard line, called it Soviet rule by Communist Party proxy. Others, as Dupree, Bradsher and Newell, called it a nationalist rather than communist coup. Gulam Muradov, a Senior Research Associate at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences, explains it as the natural and inevitable course of events in a society which denied basic human rights to its members and suffered from corruption, lawlessness and violence.¹⁹ An Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, led by Nur Taraki and his Marxist faction--the Marxist Democratic Party of the People (DPP)--headed the new government. Taraki took the premier's position, and quickly denied any rumors that he represented a Moscow controlled government. Moscow, as during other Afghan governmental overthrows, was the first to recognize the new Afghan regime.

Consistent with the trend of Afghan politics, factional in-fighting among the members of the governing parties soon broke out over the distribution of power and orientation of policies. Taraki quickly began to transform the government and military. Through purges, he brought party supporters into power. The new regime also began to implement social changes to generate support for the regime. These included the

¹⁸Negaran, 174.

¹⁹Gulam Muradov, "National-Democratic Revolution in Afghanistan: A Soviet View", Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, VI:1, (Fall 1982), 58. for Arnold, Bradsher, Dupree, and Newell see above.

cancellation of debts, land reform, marriage laws and government expansion into the public sector of the economy.²⁰ The regime, however, was unable to stabilize the conflict in the long run. The PDPA split into factions. The two major groups were the Perchamis, pro-Soviet and led by Babrak Karmal, and Khalq, more independent with Taraki and Hafizullah Amin. The Khalq faction took control; members of the Perchamis were sent away.

Soviet sources explain the failure of this first phase of the April Revolution as the fault of a new and inexperienced regime in power.

As emphasized by the PDPA Central Committee in April 1980, the PDPA lacked the well established traditions of democratic centralism and collective leadership so vital to the party under the new post revolutionary conditions. As a result, crucial decisions were quite often passed without essential careful preliminary preparation.²¹

The communist PDPA, splintered and divided, faced challenges from internal opposition, Tribal conservatives, who disliked any form of centralized control, reacted strongly to the regimes efforts to control the countryside. According to Alfred Monks, "the rebellion against Taraki's government was fueled by the DDP's own totalitarian and ultra-left policies." The new regime sought to institute policies that caused further disruption in the country side. Monks elaborates;

In the name of modernization, nomads were settled on land that could not support agriculture; told to dig wells, they were provided with no tools. As part of the land reform program, individual villagers were given individual deeds to land that was formerly shared. Devout Muslims were made to attend classes in which their religion and tribal customs were insulted and so on.²²

²⁰Negaran, 174

²¹Muradov, 60.

²²Monks, 15.

Internal unrest continued to mount. The leading Khalq faction, in turn, relied more and more on external assistance from the Soviets, based on a 20 year treaty of friendship and co-operation, similar to those between Eastern European nations and the Soviets.²³ The Guerilla war began to develop in earnest. Afghan Army units deserted and joined the resistance. By early 1979 the mounting opposition began to threaten the regime. In Herat groups of Pushtus and Shias took over. During the three days the insurgents managed to hold the city, they hunted down and murdered Khalq officials and all Soviet residents. The city was retaken only by heavy fighting with armored and air units. Herat was the first urban action conducted by the counter-revolutionary forces.²⁴ Tensions between the USSR and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan began to deteriorate.

Taraki was replaced and subsequently murdered, by his fellow Khalq comrade-Amin, who installed himself as Premier.²⁵ Amin and his government of "national deliverance", organized to rekindle and stay the flame of the revolution, sought even greater quantities of military assistance from the Soviets. Some 5,000 Soviet Advisers, serving in positions down to company level, were in place. Additionally MI-24 helicopter gunships and MIG-23 fighters were added to build up the combat punch of the forces.²⁶ Afghanistan was beginning to be an embarrassment to the Soviets.

²³Negaran, 174.

²⁴Newell, 85.

²⁵Collins, 59-69. also see Hammond, Monks, Bradsher for excellent descriptions.

²⁶Newell, 87.

At this point, the April revolution had passed its apex. From the United States standpoint, the situation remained the same. From 1972 until 1978, US interest in Afghanistan was constant. America had no important trading program with Afghanistan. There were no significant US trade routes which passed through or near Afghanistan. This nation provided no source of strategic metal, nor was it a source of oil. It did not belong to any defensive alliance which obligated US interests. America had no treaty ties with Afghanistan. There were no significant facilities, US or Allied, which required American attention. In short, there was no American direct interest. A Soviet intervention, if there was to be one, would, of course, be clearly against the US interest as a factor of Soviet expansionism. But at this stage, American analysts saw little possibility of a direct Soviet strike against the Afghans.²⁷

In 1977, as Daoud attempted to expand his global ties to set a more independent course from the Soviet Union, the Carter Administration hoped to have Daoud visit Washington. Visits were planned but cancelled or delayed due to technical difficulties. According to Bradsher, "The United States was expected to voice support for Afghan non-alignment and to make at least a gesture of increasing the long-dwindling level of aid."²⁸ But it appeared that in Washington there would be no change and that Afghanistan would remain a "political backwater".

Even after the April Revolution and the growing internal unrest in Afghanistan, the Carter Administration did not see the developing

²⁷Bradsher, 52.

²⁸Bradsher, 66.

events as critical. A number of factors are relative. First, the political agenda of US policy makers was heavily burdened with other events during this time frame. The Middle-East peace process was in full swing, Sadat had visited Jerusalem, the Camp David agreements had been signed, and finally in March 1979, an Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty signed. The Middle-East Peace process was an important item for the Administration. Second, there was some remorse over the US loss of influence with the Soviet assumption of relations toward Ethiopia. In Asia, Vietnam had invaded Kampuchea, which in turn had triggered a Chinese punitive invasion of Vietnam. These events had linkage to the Sino-Soviet and Sino-American triangle. The final version of SALT II, a NATO long term defense program and the normalization of relations with China were in progress. Carter, obviously, wanted to managed this situation carefully. In January 1979, the Shah had left Iran. Iran had been the Island of Stability for US interests in the Gulf. The Gulf, more properly, Persian Gulf oil linked to our relations in Europe and NATO. In general, the Administration's calendar of world events was full and complex.²⁹

Added to the complex nature of American interests on the global scale, was the bureaucratic hesitation of the Department of State's South Asian officials to call the Saur (April) Revolution, a Communist revolution. Calling the Revolution a Communist controlled event would have raised a red flag. The United States had already recognized Soviet

²⁹Robin Edmonds, Soviet Foreign Policy: The Brezhnev Years, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983). discusses the chronology of events. Also see Ulam, Dangerous Relations,

interests as vital and American as limited.³⁰ It also would have required the total cut off of the meager amount of US AID funds still flowing into the country-a last form of American influence. However, the entire situation changed radically on 14 February 1979 when the US Ambassador to Afghanistan, Adolphus Dubs, was kidnapped in Kabul. Dubs was the former State Department South Asian Analyst who had called Afghanistan a quiet situation and, later, had urged for contingency planning should the Soviets launch an invasion. Ambassador Dubs was killed in a rescue attempt by Afghan government forces. Although several authors allege that the Soviets may have been involved, there is no conclusive proof. The result of this tragic occurrence was the Carter Administration's sudden and total cut off of all forms of American aid, the pull out of all US dependents and the reduction of the Embassy staff to a skeleton.³¹

From the Soviet perspective, the situation in Afghanistan was evolving into a serious challenge. Daoud's regime had included a number of pro-Soviet leftist officers. After the first two years of his regime, Daoud began moving the pro-Soviet members of his government to backwater positions or out of the country. Daoud's shift to the right, away from the Soviet Camp, was cause for concern. Rubinstein offers that Soviet decision makers may have wondered if Afghanistan was headed in the same fundamentalist direction as

³⁰Hammond, 41.

³¹Collins, 58. and Bradsher, 99. suggest that the cut off of funds had little effect, since most aid was not getting through to its intended receivers in the first place. This was due to insurgent activity.

Iran.³² Finally, Daoud embarrassed the Soviets on issues of foreign policy. Daoud's growing involvement in the non-aligned movement, after Afghanistan's attempt to block Cuba's bid for leadership of the non-aligned movement and criticism of Soviet actions in the Ogaden, may have peaked Soviet tolerance with Daoud's regime.³³

Leaders of the April Revolution at first claimed to be nationalist rather than communist. However, the thin curtain of camouflage quickly fell. In a number of ways, the Afghan Communist seizure of power matches the seizure of power of Communist Parties in the Eastern European, People's Democracies.³⁴ Specifically, similarity exists in the form of camouflage portrayed to the outside world. The regime initially claimed to be nationalist. Additionally, the ruthlessness which the PDPA used to achieve its ends was similar to the takeover tactics used in Europe. The PDPA also claims to have planned and practiced the takeover, thus eliminating any chance for failure. Unlike some of the communist seizures of power elsewhere in the world, the April revolution did not require outside force to be effective. In this sense, the "Afghan case is the one that most clearly resembles Lenin's own Bolshevik Revolution, which was really a coup."³⁵

The success of the April Revolution was fated for failure by the same factional politics which have been present in Afghan politics for some time. Resistance to the Communist party's efforts to consolidate

³²Rubinstein, 151.

³³Bradsher, 66-67.

³⁴Thomas T. Hammond ed., The Anatomy of Communist Takeovers, New Haven Conn.: Yale University Press, 1971). 1-46, 638-644.

³⁵Bradsher, 81.

power, coupled with unpopular domestic changes in a Muslim society, led to "rising alarm and indignation among many leaders and rank and file members of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and also of non-party patriots from all sections of Afghan society. . ."36 As a result, widespread repressive measures were enforced, as evidenced in the Herat incident. The Soviets were drawn increasingly into a difficult position from which they could not withdraw. Defensively, Soviet interests lay in protecting the lives of Soviet citizens in Afghanistan. Economically, they were threatened with potential loss of an import source for natural gas, cotton, wool and various agricultural products. They were also challenged with the loss of their investments in Afghanistan's development projects.

The costs of the degenerating situation in Afghanistan can also be classified in a world order sense and ideologically. In a World Order sense, Afghanistan may have degenerated into a form of anarchy. Traditional control by a king had been abolished, Tribal rule was the only possible fall back to a successful reinforcement of the Communist government. Such measures could not have guaranteed a settlement to Afghanistan's problems. Ideologically, the situation in Afghanistan was developing into a failure of Marxist principles. Following the Soviet invasion the PDPA Central Committee admitted to the failures of the party in effectively controlling the situation.³⁷ To allow such a failure would be a blow to Marxist-Leninist ideology on the whole, and this would be too great a risk. What had previously been called a vital

³⁶Muradov, 63-64.

³⁷Muradov, 60.

Soviet interest by US policy makers was developing into a circumstance requiring action. By mid-August 1979, it was obvious to the Soviets that something would have to be done.

E. Intervention and the Unwinnable War

Depending upon your perspective the Soviet actions on 27 December 1979 in Afghanistan could be termed either rendering fraternal assistance to a friendly socialist neighbor in need, or a ruthless, overt invasion. The facts are that the Soviet Union, perceiving the need to intervene in the domestic upheaval in Afghanistan, did so. This action and the subsequent seven years of quagmire which have followed, have caused unmeasured damage to the Soviet Union's relations in Asia and the world. The intervention has caused the United States to re-evaluate its interests in the South West Asian region and Persian Gulf, and change its plans accordingly. This section will examine the Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan, and the effects of it on the national interests of the United States and the Soviet Union.

Jiri Valenta, in a Fall 1980 article in *International Security*, compared the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan to the 1968 intervention in Czechoslovakia. In both cases Soviet decision makers saw the potential failure of a Marxist regime and deemed it critical to the interests of the Soviet Union to invade.

The decisions to intervene in Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan had many motivations, the most important being Soviet perceptions of both regimes' instability and unreliability. Domestic and strategic considerations followed. In the Soviets' view, Alexander Dubcek and Hafizullah Amin were charting independent courses in domestic politics in disregard of Soviet counsel, and future developments in both countries were as unpredictable as they were dangerous.¹

Whether the decision to send Soviet troops into Afghanistan was motivated for the defense of the fatherland, as suggested by

¹Jiri Valenta, "From Prague to Kabul", *International Security*, 5:2, (Fall 1980), 115.

George Kennan, or whether it was to establish a better geostrategic position from which to further the ancient Tzarist goal of expansion, as suggested by Richard Pipes, seems a secondary justification, forwarded by western analysts, when you consider the actual conditions surrounding the invasion.² Soviet sources do not agree with either thesis. Several factors indicate that the urgency of the situation, as seen from Moscow, dictated the actions taken. From mid-summer 1979 until the actual invasion in December, the domestic political and military situation in Afghanistan became increasingly chaotic. The April Revolution had failed to bring about expected changes as factional politics had divided the PDPA. Amin, either by choice or necessity, turned increasingly to repression in order to control the population. Resistance to Amin's regime, or for that matter, to any central authority-communist or otherwise--was a cultural trait in Afghan society. Throughout the history of Afghanistan, rulers have only been able to consolidate control through coalitions with the support of the local tribal leaders.

During the summer of 1979, Afghanistan was in the middle of full scale tribal revolt. Additionally, the Afghan Army was decimated by defections to the rebel cause. The Central Afghan Government controlled only Kabul, the capital, and the major cities. Rebels had taken several provincial capitals and had murdered a large number of Soviet military advisers and civilians. The members of the leading Khalq faction seemed to be out of touch with the situation, realizing neither the

²"How Real is the Soviet Threat", US News and World Report, 10 March, 1980, p33.

seriousness of domestic upheaval nor the concern of their Soviet benefactors. According to Mark Heller...

Khalq leaders were serious about their revolution, and they were intent upon a forced-pace transformation of Afghanistan from a traditional-feudal society into a socialist society, bypassing the capitalist stage of development. They were not much concerned about the costs or instability resulting from such a policy; nor did they much care that the Soviets were concerned about the widespread instability in a country that up till now had caused no trouble. They therefore began to implement such measures as the redistribution of land, the cancellation of debts, the repression of Islamic institutions and dignitaries, limitations on forced marriage and bride-price, and the introduction of compulsory political-education classes under the guise of an anti-illiteracy campaign.³

The first Soviet attempt to rectify the deteriorating situation was to replace Amin. In September, Taraki was on his way back to Afghanistan from a meeting of the non-aligned movement in Cuba. He stopped in Moscow for consultations. During Taraki's visit, the Soviets assured him of their 'all-round' support and warned him of their concern for the degenerating scene in his country. When Taraki returned to Kabul, "the Soviets appear to have organized and/or supported an anti-Amin coup on September 14-15, their objective being to establish a Khalq-Parcham (Perchamis) coalition government led by Taraki and Karmal"⁴

Karmal had been the victim of an earlier purge, and had been sent to Czechoslovakia as a representative of the Afghan Government. The Soviets apparently thought he was a trustworthy replacement. At the same time the Soviets transported a 400 man airborne unit to a critical airbase not far from Kabul. This may have been to support the coup. In any case, whether forewarned or not, Amin intercepted the attempt.

³Mark Heller, "The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan", The Washington Quarterly, (Summer, 1980), 37.

⁴Valenta, "From Prague to Kabul", 130.

Kabul Radio announced on 16 September that Comrade Taraki had retired from public service for reasons of 'ill health' and that Amin was assuming full powers. For the Soviets, this made the situation worse, because Amin now held the reins without any moderating influence of a third party. As for Taraki, "it quickly became obvious that Taraki's 'illness' was caused by bullet holes in the body."⁵

The actual date of the Soviet decision to intervene remains unknown. Various scholars put it in the late summer, others in November and December, while still others say that it had always been the Soviet intention to forcefully expand their empire to the south. There is no direct evidence to support any Soviet intent to intervene. Only circumstances point to their intentions. As Soviet aid increased during the fall, Amin increasingly became unable to suppress the rebel forces. To the Soviets this was a more dangerous scene than in Czechoslovakia. The regime itself was increasingly unstable. On the diplomatic front the Soviets began to test the waters in the United States, seeking to gauge American Administrative reaction. They began to pronounce support for the Iranians, who under Khomeini, pushed against American influence. Between March and December, a number of Soviet General officers made extended visits, possibly to measure the potential of a successful intervention. These included; Army General A. Epishev, director of the Main Political Administration of the Soviet Armed Forces in April; General I. Pavlovski, Deputy Minister of Defense and Commander in Chief of the Soviet Ground Forces (who

⁵Heller, 38. Also see Bradsher, 100-125 and Collins, 65-69.

also happened to have been the Commander of the forces that invaded Czechoslovakia eleven years earlier) from August to October; and Lt General V. Paputin, the first deputy minister of the interior on 28 November, 1979.⁶

In September, the US Embassy reported increasing unhappiness on the Soviet part with the Afghan government.⁷ In October, Soviet pilots were flying combat missions for the Afghan Army against rebel targets. Reserve forces began to assemble in the Central Asian republics. More and more Soviets were used as advisers at company level in the Afghan army, while the guerilla detachments of the resistance spread actions throughout the countryside with increasing effectiveness. By the end of October the Afghan Army was judged to be totally ineffective against opposition. In November it appears that the Soviets began using forms of Maskirovka--strategic deception/camouflage--to cover their intentions. Soviets also began to position troops and intensify their pro-Khomeini/anti-American propaganda. In the beginning of December, five Soviet Motorized Divisions were mobilized on the Afghan border and three battalions, consisting of upwards to 1,500 men, were flown in to secure airbases at Kabul, Bagram and Shindad. With troops in place the Soviets effectively controlled the major road networks into and around Kabul. Refugees began to stream into the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan at an increasing rate. Diplomatically, the Soviets again began

⁶Heller, Collins and Valenta all cite these visits and allude to the possible intentions of the General officers during their stays.

⁷Collins, 67.

hinting to US sources at better managing the US-Soviet relationship. By the 20th of December the trap was set; careful preparation would ensure success.⁸

The actual invasion was anti-climatic. On Christmas eve, AN-12 and AN-22 aircraft began ferrying members of the 105th Airborne Guards Division into the region of the capital. By the 26th, better than 5,000 troops were on the ground. Combat operations began on the evening of the 27th and by morning the Soviets had secured all major initial objectives in the city. Amin was held, and with members of his family, executed on the morning of the 28th. Later that day Babrak Karmal was installed as the new General Secretary of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan. The Soviet perspective on the invasion reads;

Analysing the situation arising in Afghanistan and on its southern borders due to the activities of the armed counterrevolutionary gangs penetrating the country from abroad, many observers and scholars came to the conclusion that Amin was posing a growing threat not only to the future of the April revolution, but to the unity of Afghanistan as well. . . The discontent with Hafizullah Amin's activity and mass repression staged on his orders was widespread. . . On December 27, 1979, the patriotic and sound majority of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, of the Revolutionary Council and the armed forces of the DRA overthrew the Amin Regime. . . The events of December 27-28, 1979 mark the beginning of the new phase of the national democratic April Revolution.⁹

The original goal of the Soviet intervention was four fold. First, to eliminate outside interference and to ensure that it did not return, in code to stop the rebel fighters moving across the Pakistani and Iranian borders. Second, to contain those resistance fighters operating from within Afghanistan. Third, to buy time for the installed regime to

⁸Numerous sources detail the Soviet plans. This description compiled from Heller, Valenta, Collins, Bradsher, Arnold and Monks.

⁹Muradov, 64.

eliminate the disunity within the PDPA and re-establish a working government. And finally, to remove Amin from the seat of power, and eliminate "a cunning individual with an inordinate lust for power." The Soviets insisted that they were requested by the Afghans to come to their assistance, and that their stay in Afghanistan is only "of a limited nature". American imperialism, in collusion with Chinese designs, is repeatedly blamed as the cause for continued resistance activities.¹⁰

Rather than accomplishing the first two priorities, resistance after the invasion only became more fervent and committed. The effort by the rebels caused the Soviets to call in reinforcements, which began to arrive on 11 January 1980. Estimates held that troop strength was between 85,000 and 100,000 by the middle of January as the Soviets extended their fight out of the cities and into the countryside.¹¹ By 1986 it would seem that Afghanistan is the unwinnable war. The resistance is too weak to push the Soviets totally out and the Soviets have far too much at stake in the conflict to give up.

Despite multi-lateral talks, bi-lateral talks, efforts by United Nations Commissions and numerous private citizens of all nationalities to bring an end to the conflict, no solution has been reached to date. Alvin Rubinstein tells a story about a conversation heard at a conference of Soviet and American scholars in Washington, early in 1983. Two participants, a Soviet and a Japanese, were discussing

¹⁰Pravda, 2 July 1980, p4 cited in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 30 July 1980. and Victor Sidenko, "Two Years of the Afghan Revolution", New Times, no 17. April 1980, 20-22.

¹¹Heller, 41.

Soviet policy in Afghanistan. The Soviet strongly upheld the his nation's position.

He told of being asked by a Japanese official why Soviet troops were in Afghanistan and countering by asking why American troops were in Japan. 'They are here in accordance with the United States-Japan security treaty,' said the Japanese official. 'We have a treaty with Afghanistan. And Soviet troops will remain in Afghanistan as long as American troops remain in Japan', was the retort-an unmistakable message to the Americans and the conference.¹²

This brief conversation illustrates the position that perspective plays in understanding the relative intensity of national interests in the Afghanistan case study.

US Perspective

The US position towards the Afghanistan invasion is an example of how quickly the perspective of a nation can change. In the years leading up to the invasion, Afghanistan was only a minor concern to American policy makers. To the American nation, Afghanistan was a distant land. In short, Afghanistan was termed a 'backwater'. When, in the 1950s and 60's, US Containment policy involved building a defensive belt of mutual defense treaties on the periphery of the Soviet Union, Afghanistan was omitted because it was too distant. It is easy to say that the interest of the United States did not involve Afghanistan because the 1931 Soviet-Afghan Treaty was in effect, and that Afghanistan was a traditional enemy of Pakistan. However, at a more basic level, Afghanistan did not fit the American need. What then caused President Carter to declare Afghanistan a vital interest to the United States?

¹²Alvin Z. Rubinstein, "The Soviet Union and Afghanistan", Current History, (October, 1983), 338.

In August 1979, Zbigniew Brzezinski, the President's National Security Adviser, warned the Soviets not to take any actions towards the Afghans¹³. Throughout the fall, US intelligence analysts realized that changes were pending in Afghanistan as they carefully watched the strategic build up. However, in November the overriding concern of the Administration turned to the Hostage crisis in Iran. Another aspect according to Mark Heller was the position of those analysts involved in forecasting Soviet intentions. The problem for analysts, sifting through the information forwarded, was interpreting the data. By December 21st, officials noted the presence of troops along the northern Afghan border but declined to detail such to the Press. The Administration was divided over the significance of the build up. Once the massive airlift began some of the questions were answered. But the most prevalent belief was that the Soviets were going in to assist Amin rather than to overthrow him. According to the State Department, technically, the Soviets were not the aggressing, "but only what Hodding Carter, at the State Department Briefing on December 26, called 'blatant military interference in the internal affairs of an independent sovereign state'".¹⁴

US reaction took several days to develop. President Carter quickly went on television and announced that the invasion was "a grave threat to peace". By the end of the month the reaction was stronger as he called the Soviet explanations of the intervention "completely inadequate and completely misleading". . ."not telling the

¹³New York Times, 6 August 1979, p1.

¹⁴Heller, 42.

facts correctly". After New Year's, Carter sent a mission to Europe to consult with the allies. The American Ambassador to the Soviet Union was recalled from Moscow. Actions were begun in the UN to discuss the Soviet actions. Carter announced that the Soviets "could not violate world peace without paying severe political consequences." Carter requested to delay debate over the SALT II treaty in the Senate. On 4 January, he again went on television and outlined a series of steps to punish the Soviets. These included: renewing cancelled military assistance programs to Pakistan; limiting high technology and strategic equipment sales to the Soviet Union; actions to cancel or relocate the upcoming Olympic Games, curtailing Soviet fishing rights in US waters, limiting deliveries of grain already sold to the Soviets; and cutting back the scheduled flights of Aeroflot.¹⁵

The President's actions culminated in the State of the Union Address on 23 January, 1980. This annual address usually sets the tone for American National Interest, as the President presents his view of the needs of the American people. Carter's 1980 message was overwhelmed by two events, the Hostage Crisis in Iran and the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan. Carter began by describing the situation America faced. "These two acts --one of international terrorism and one of military aggression-- present a serious challenge to the United States and to other nations of the world. Together, we will meet these

¹⁵Heller, 42. Bradsher 189-199. Also see Christopher Van Hollen, "Leaning on Pakistan", Foreign Policy, 38 (Spring 1980), 35-50. Lawrence Ziring, "Political Dilemmas and Instability in South and Southwest Asia", Asian Affairs, (Spring 1983), 37-47. And for the impact of the Olympic boycott Laurence Barton, "The American Olympic Boycott of 1980: The Amalgam of Diplomacy and Propaganda in Influencing Public Opinion", (Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1983).

threats to peace." According to the President, the Soviet Union and its actions remained a critical interest for Americans. "Now, as during the last three and a half decades, the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union is the most critical factor in determining whether the world will live in peace or be engulfed in global conflict". The Soviets actions in Carter's view were radical and aggressive. As such Carter let it be known that he considered the American duty to protect the region.

The implications of the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan could pose the most serious threat to world peace since the second World War. . . Let our position be absolutely clear: An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States. It will be repelled by use of any means necessary, including military force.¹⁶

To meet the direct military challenge perceived by the Administration, Carter called for the revitalization of American forces oriented toward the Persian Gulf region. The result was the creation of the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF), whose mission was to actively fight the war and deter aggression. The Reagan Administration, later realizing the limited capability of such a force to handle diplomatic and economic aspects, bolstered the force to a Unified Command better capable of handling long range demands.¹⁷

To build up a credible defense in the region, after having lost Iran as an 'Island of Stability', Carter turned to Pakistan. In November 1979 mobs of Islamic students had sacked and burned to US Embassy in

¹⁶President Jimmy Carter, "State of the Union Address", delivered to a Joint Session of Congress, Washington, D.C. 23 January, 1980. text in Vital Speeches of the Day, (February 1, 1980), 1.

¹⁷Lt. Gen. Robert Kingston, "From RDF to CENTCOM: New Challenges?", RUSI: Journal of the Royal Services Institute for Defense Studies, 129:1 (1 March 1984), 14-17.

Islamabad, killing two Americans and four Pakistani nationals. The riots were sparked by rumors of American involvement on the Grand Mosque takeover in Mecca. This had been preceded by the cutoff of virtually all forms of assistance, military and economic, as required by the Symington Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act and Carters concerns for supposed human rights violations of the Zia-ul-Huq regime in Pakistan. Immediately following the Soviet invasion, Carter set aside all concerns about human rights, nuclear nonproliferation and the Embassy bombing incident and "executed a remarkable about face in a head long rush to embrace (Pakistani President) Zia".¹⁸ Carter assured Zia of US support in assisting Islamabad counter the Soviet threat from Afghanistan, including armed forces if necessary. Zia, in turn, rejected Washington's \$400 million in aid terming it 'Peanuts'. Pakistan did not accept any US offers until the newly inaugurated Reagan Administration made a more generous \$3.2 billion offer in June 1981. It appeared that Zia's restraint was due to fear of Soviet reprisal.¹⁹

Among the arsenal of tools that the President had hoped to use against the Soviets was the support of World allies. While many nations --even some socialist and closely tied to the Soviets-- did react in some form, there was reluctance to react as strongly as the US. Yugoslavia and Rumania showed the disapproval in the United Nations. Rumania even went so far as to sign a joint declaration with

¹⁸Van Hollen, 38.

¹⁹David Ignatius, "US Aid to Afghan Rebels Restrained by Fear of Soviet Retaliation in Pakistan." Wall Street Journal, 9 April 1984, 38.

Great Britain criticising the intervention. Great Britain noted the lack of prior coordination among the allies prior to initiating economic sanctions. West Germany, while supporting the boycott of the Olympics, increased its exports to the Soviet Union by 31 percent for a period. Among Islamic nations there was a strong reaction against the Soviets initially, especially from Iran, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. However, in the long run, with the exception of boycotting a meeting of the International Islamic Conference for 1980 in Tashkent, criticism did not last long. In the United Nations, after months of discussion and countering moves by Soviet supporters, in November 1980 there was finally a vote in the General Assembly for an immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan.²⁰

In general, while the protests and sanctions led by the United States initially were quite vocal, within the year most relations had returned to normal. The Allies supported political sanctions but were slow to support economic sanctions with the same fervor. An interesting aside is the reaction to the Olympic boycott. While the United States led a contingent of 36 nations in the boycott of the games, most of the participating nations still attended, including Puerto Rico. According to Laurence Barton the Olympic boycott did manage to perhaps dent Soviet prestige and public relations goals. It also gave the United States the opportunity to take charge on a global protest against a communist regime. But it did not place enough pressure on the Soviets to withdraw from Afghanistan, nor did it rally enough support

²⁰Bradsher, 199-204. Collins, 85-89.

to pressure the International Olympic Organizing Committee to cancel or change the location of the games, nor was it a comprehensive propaganda victory for the West --even considering the number of nations that did pull out.²¹

Since President Carter's strong actions and words in January 1980, public sentiment in the United States and Administration actions have not shown the same intensity. The Reagan Administration did upgrade the capability of the RDF by creating CENTCOM and Pakistan did accept a comprehensive assistance package to help develop their well trained Army. The questionable commitment of the Administration and Congress to hold Afghanistan as a vital intensity interest led Selig Harrison to question. . ."Are We Fighting to the Last Afghan?" As negotiations continued in the United Nations, Harrison believed that. . . "Despite formal statements of support, the Reagan Administration has done little to further the faltering United Nations mediation effort on Afghanistan." This was because an agreement meant that Pakistan would have recognized a Communist regime in Kabul. When Harrison objected to an intelligence official that the US position amounted to a policy of "fighting to the last Afghan", the response he received was that "the Afghans love to fight."²² In contrast to Carters declarations about taking any measure to halt Soviet aggression in Afghanistan, President Reagan has focused more on domestic problems and the impact of Soviet support for Nicaragua's Communist regime.

²¹Barton, 127-147.

²²Selig Harrison, "Are We Fighting to the Last Afghan?", Washington Post, 29 December, 1983. A17.

In his 1985 State of the Union Address, President Reagan only briefly mentioned Afghanistan. After commenting at length about the growth of the economy, SDI, and the virtues of freedom, his comment on Afghanistan was. . ."And we must not break faith with those who are risking their lives --on every continent, from Afghanistan to Nicaragua-- to defy Soviet supported aggression and secure rights which have been ours from birth."²³ In 1986, the Presidents remarks again extolled the virtues of the American dream. In light of the recent Space Shuttle disaster he focused on the challenges of transforming technology to help build better lives. He talked about controlling or eliminating nuclear weapons and controlling the budget, all important themes. But relative to Afghanistan his comments were. . .

To those imprisoned in regimes held captive, to those beaten for daring to fight for freedom and democracy -for their right to worship, to speak to live and to prosper in the family of free nations-we say to you tonight: you are not alone freedom fighters. America will support you with moral and material assistance, your right not just to fight and die for freedom, but to fight and win freedom -to win freedom in Afghanistan; in Angola; in Cambodia; and in Nicaragua. . .²⁴

From the above remarks it is difficult to judge Afghanistan as a vital US interest. This is especially true when the President continued to speak only about the importance of Nicaragua as a critical interest to peace and national security in the western hemisphere, foresaking other global conflicts. As noted in a recent Congressional Research service paper by Richard P. Cronin, there is still no consensus about what US goals should be. Varying positions are debated. One group

²³President Ronald Reagan, "State of the Union Address", delivered to Congress 6 February 1985, Vital Speeches of the Day, 15 Feb. 1985.

²⁴President Ronald Reagan, "State of the Union Address", delivered to Congress 4 February 1986, Vital Speeches of the Day, 1 March 1986.

maintains that aid to the resistance should be limited "aimed of delaying the consolidation of Soviet strategic advantage while not overly exposing Pakistan to Soviet Pressure or military retaliation." Still others forward the position that US policy goals should be more aggressive. . . "with more effective aid the resistance can extract a high enough price to cause the Soviets to seek a negotiated withdrawal." And a third group believes that the United States should provide a greater level of aid to the resistance. . . "on ideological and moral grounds regardless of the prospects."²⁵ It is generally agreed that the only effective assistance which can be rendered by the United States is to support the nationalist resistance. In doing so the cost of Soviet efforts in Afghanistan is raised.

US assistance to the Afghan nationalist resistance is limited. Most overt aid goes to supporting Pakistani efforts to solve the refugee problems in the North-West Frontier Province. Covert assistance is supposedly on the rise. Estimates vary as to the exact amount of aid funneled to the Afghans. In January 1980 the Carter Administration supposedly provided \$30 million, which grew to \$80 million by 1984.²⁶ In 1984, another source said that Congressional pressure had pushed to figure the \$280 million for 1985.²⁷ Still another source put the amount at \$470 million, charging that 50 percent or

²⁵Richard P. Cronin, "The United States, Pakistan and the Soviet Threat to Southern Asia: Options for Congress", a paper for the Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.: September 1985, 13.

²⁶Ignatius, Wall Street Journal, 9 April 1984.

²⁷Leslie H. Gelb, "US Aides Put '85 Arms Supplies to Afghan Rebels at \$280 Million", New York Times, 28 November 1984. p1.

more of all covert aid is skimmed off by the Pakistani military.²⁸ While the credibility of these reports should be subject to scrutiny, they emphasize that the US has committed itself to support the rebel cause.

Soviet Perspective

For the Soviet Union the war in Afghanistan has become a dismal reality. There have been economic costs to pay in this conflict. But more than the limited effects on the Soviet economy, the cost to Soviet foreign policy efforts in the Third World and the limited possibility of a painless withdrawal is a difficult barrier to overcome. Selig Harrison put it this way; "While the Soviet Union cannot be forcibly dislodged from Afghanistan by resistance forces, neither is it likely to consolidate a communist regime there in the foreseeable future. Moscow no longer attempts to conceal this dismal reality. . ."²⁹ A number of analysts try to foresee an Afghanistan without Soviet forces. Since Daoud's coup abolished the Monarchy and the April revolution totally negated the possibility of a non-communist regime, the Soviets are faced with an enormous task of reconstructing a legitimate and sovereign government. Since the April revolution, Soviet specialists have been increasingly involved in running the government. Bradsher describes it as a vicious circle. "Soviet advisers run everything to an extent that discourages Afghans in the regime from doing much more than shuffling papers. There is a vicious circle: The Soviets trust few Afghans, and

²⁸"Pakistan: Leaks in the Pipeline", Time, 9 December 1985, p50.

²⁹Selig S. Harrison, "A Breakthrough in Afghanistan?", Foreign Policy, (Summer, 1983), 6.

few Afghans are willing to take risks in working for the Soviets",³⁰ This leads to Lenin's often repeated question, 'What is to be done?'

The basic components of Soviet Afghan policy have changed very little till today. The original plan called for controlling critical urban centers of administrative importance, controlling communication between these centers and eliminating resistance. This plan was supposed to give the PDPA time to consolidate and educate the population, thereby developing support of the revolution. This plan had worked well in Czechoslovakia and according to Soviet estimates should have worked in Afghanistan. However, it backfired with the protracted resistance of the guerilla counter-revolutionaries. Numerous efforts to enlist the support of the population, ranging from force to reward have been attempted. Reminiscent of the creation of Eastern European People's Democracies after World War II, the Soviets formed a 'National Fatherland Front' as an umbrella organization in June 1981.³¹ Its goal was to mobilize the population at local level, but has accomplished almost nothing.

Yuri Andropov continued Brezhnev's programs; at one point telling a Western press source, "By helping Afghanistan, we defend our national interests. . .". The Soviet position remained firm; in January 1983 Pravda declared. . ."The revolutionary process in Afghanistan is irreversible. the Afghan people have reliable friends."³² Under

³⁰Henry S. Bradsher, "Afghanistan", The Washington Quarterly, 7:3 (Summer 1984), 52.

³¹Rubinstein, "The Soviet Union and Afghanistan", 321.

³²Bradsher, "Afghanistan", 43-44.

Andropov, military policy expanded to the use of a strong state security wing, the KHAD was modeled on the KGB and attempted to infiltrate and demoralize the resistance. When Chernenko succeeded Andropov he inherited the former's programs. Soviet press stressed the 'continuity of the foreign policy course'. The only innovation in military strategy during Chernenko's brief period in power was the creation of an Afghan people's militia besides the regular army. It is possible that this tactic may have been oriented towards 'Afghanizing' the war.³³ This illustrated a policy similar to the American strategy of 'Vietnamization' as the US attempted to turn the war over to the South Vietnamese.

Mikhail Gorbachev's assumption of power brought a new face to Soviet foreign policy. Although he was a new face, it did not necessarily mean that there would be a new foreign policy. Gorbachev did step up initiatives in Afghanistan. On the diplomatic front, Gorbachev made known his intentions for a negotiated settlement. But proposals were merely vague rhetoric. In his 1986 report to the Central Committee during the 27th Congress of the Communist Party, Gorbachev called Afghanistan a "bleeding wound".

Counterrevolution and imperialism have turned Afghanistan into a bleeding wound. The USSR supports that country's efforts to defend its sovereignty. We should like in the near future to withdraw the Soviet troops stationed in Afghanistan at the request of its government. Moreover, we have agreed with the Afghan side on the schedule for their phased withdrawal as soon as a political settlement is reached that insures an actual cessation and dependably guarantees the non-resumption of foreign armed interference in the internal affairs of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. IT IS IN OUR VITAL, NATIONAL INTEREST (capitals added) that the USSR should always have

³³Zhores A. Medvedev, Gorbachev, (New York: Norton and Company, 1986), 234.

good and peaceful relations with all its neighbors. This is a vitally important objective of our foreign policy.³⁴

Gorbachev looked further toward settling the conflict by creating a Ministry of Islam Affairs. "The newly established Ministry of Islam Affairs sought to reduce the conflict between Marxism and Islam, councils of elders were re-established in tribal areas. . ."³⁵ Domestically, in the Soviet Union, it was impossible to continually repress the reports of war casualties. Since the 1979 invasion US sources estimated 10,000 Soviet deaths and 20,000 wounded. To build a consensus of supportive public opinion at home, the Gorbachev initiated a "second front. . .to marshal patriotic support for his country's longest war." Reports in the media compared the actions of Soviet troops in Afghanistan to those of their fathers in the Great Patriotic War. . ."high-lighting the courage, determination and sacrifice of Soviet fighting men in Afghanistan, a campaign touching the emotions that run deep in a nation that reportedly lost some 20 million soldiers and citizens in World War II."³⁶ Diplomatic and political efforts differed considerably from efforts in military strategy.

While maintaining a constant level of political rhetoric, the Soviets stepped up their military efforts after Gorbachev became General-Secretary. If there is a benefit to any major group in the Afghanistan conflict, it is the Soviet military which has gained valuable

³⁴General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev, "Political Report to the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union", delivered 25 February, 1986. New Times, 9:86, p38.

³⁵Medvedev, 234.

³⁶Nicholas Daniloff, "Afghan War Finally Hits Soviets' Home Front", US News and World Report, 16 December, 1985, p41.

experience in fighting with counter-insurgency methods. The costs, both economically and in human lives, is little compared to the gains in experience for the Soviets. Tactically, Soviet troops began adjusting to the demands of counter-guerilla warfare. On the ground, they used a more effective form of hit-and-run commando tactic. "Most effective are ambushes by Soviet special forces --the Spetznaz-- armed with silencer-equipped weapons."³⁷ The Soviets also expanded their security belts around cities and army bases, making it more difficult for rebel forces to strike. In the air, they began more effectively employing their combat helicopter resources, adopting swift strike tactics. To cut off guerilla forces from outside support, the Soviets started heavily covering in and out routes with air dropped mines. Bombers were also used in a scorched earth type tactic, designed to disrupt rebel support in local villages. A bonus effect of this tactic was the renewed pressure exerted on Pakistan by an intensified refugee flow. Estimates on refugees range from 3 to 4 million since the beginning of the war. Fighters also continued to support ground forces with air-ground strikes and by flying missions along the Pakistani border threatening to strike cross border guerilla strongholds.³⁸

One additional aspect which some analysts point to is the nationality problem. As Amin purged qualified Afghans from the civil service structure of the Afghan government the Soviets were

³⁷Edward Giradet, "Behind New Soviet Tactics in Afghanistan", US News and World Report, 20 January, 1986, p39.

³⁸Medvedev, 235. also see Giradet, US News and World Report 20 Jan. 1986. and "US Doctors Leave Afghanistan", The Sunday Herald, 13 October 1985, p9A; "Pakistani Fighter Jets Shoot Down Afghan MiG-21", The Sunday Herald, 18 May, 1986, p1.

required to provide more and more resources to fill the void. One possibility was that a spillover effect might reach the Central Asian populations to the north.

James Critchlow, in a Spring 1980 article, wrote about the significance of ties between Afghan tribal groups and Soviet Central Asians. He noted that "russocentric societal norms prescribed from Moscow only reinforce Central Asian hostility to the Kremlin." Central Asian Muslims are gradually becoming more conscious of their ethno-linguistic ties with Muslim populations throughout the Middle-East and South-West Asia. "With respect to the Muslim populations immediately bordering the USSR, however, they share proximity and historical experience." This has tended to cause the Soviet Central Government to refrain from using Central Asians in jobs allowing for contact between Soviets and Islamic nations. But Afghanistan was an exception, in that a large number of Central Asians were used as civilian advisers and military personnel in Afghanistan before the invasion. Whether to attempt to quiet the Afghans or for some other unknown reason the Soviets sent a Muslim Tartar (Fikrat A. Tabeev) to Kabul as Ambassador just prior to their invasion. "The Soviet Muslims have had extensive opportunities to interact with their co-nationals in the Afghan population, which consists of more than four million Uzbeks and three million Tajiks, plus smaller numbers of Turkmen."³⁹

As noted by Wimbush and Alexiev in 1983, following Taraki's ascent to power in 1978, "a considerable number of Soviet Central

³⁹James Critchlow, "Minarets and Marx", *The Washington Quarterly*, (Spring, 1980), 53-55.

Asians were sent to Afghanistan --as interpreters and technicians-- to service the new round of USSR-Afghanistan contracts initiated at that time. . .Soviet Central Asians moved into critical sectors of the Afghanistan bureaucracy, the universities and institutes, and into other key political, social, economic, and cultural issues. . .".⁴⁰ The result of this infusion of Soviet Muslims was at times less than successful. Afghans resented the infusion of Soviet Muslims, especially Uzbeks in a predominately Pashto majority bureaucracy. Moscow did not realize the strength of ethnicity in Afghan society.⁴¹

This issue is a double-edged sword for the Soviet Central government. On the one hand, they must be concerned with the flow of ideas from Afghanistan to their own Central Asian Republics. The legacy of the Basmachi revolts still exists. Furthermore, Central Asian soldiers were charged with co-operating with the rebels --selling or giving away their weapons. On the other hand, ignoring the multi-ethnic composition of the Afghan state, with the diversity of tribes and languages, would lead to the same unsuccessful results they had on first sending Central Asians into Afghanistan. Under Gorbachev, the policy has been to recognize the significance of Islam in both Soviet and Afghan society, and to attempt to deal with it. In dealing with the issue of Islam, the Soviets can only strengthen their own position in Central

⁴⁰S. Enders Wimbush and Alex Alexiev, "Soviet Central Asian Soldiers in Afghanistan", *Conflict: All Warfare Short of War: An International Journal*, 4 (1983), 329.

⁴¹Interview with Dr. Eden Nabi, 18 March 1986.

Asia, in Afghanistan under a Marxist regime and quite possibly gain take advantage of the disharmony of a divided resistance movement.⁴²

In conclusion, the Soviets are in a difficult position. Their number one stated goal is security of their southern borders from what they believe to be foreign intervention. From the Soviet perspective this is a real concern. Since the invasion they have not accomplished their goal of eliminating the resistance to an Afghan Marxist regime. As Flora Lewis noted the Soviet position in Afghanistan is perhaps more critical than the US position in Vietnam at the end of the war. She believes that a Soviet withdrawal would leave Afghanistan in a political vacuum. "In a way, their situation is worse than America's in Vietnam because there is no Hanoi to move in and let them off the hook, even in ignominy. An unprepared pullout would leave chaos, not a new Soviet order."⁴³ In a way, this is America's problem too, at least in a humanistic and moral sense.

⁴²Medvedev, 236. and Flora Lewis, "No Easy Way Out", New York Times, 29 November 1985, p25. For a comprehensive discussion of the significance of the Islamic factor, especially among the resistance, see Oliver Roy, "Afghanistan: Islam and Political Modernity", JPRS Near East/South Asia Report JPRS-NEA-85-116; 11 September 1985.

⁴³New York Times, 29 November 1985, p25.

VI. Afghanistan: A Focused Comparison of Interests

Using the method developed in Chapter II and considering the development of interests in Chapter V, a comparison of interests in Afghanistan today is best described using the illustration below. The intensity of interest is a subjective judgement based upon the relative position of each actor. It is necessary to keep in mind the operational definition of each, as you consider individual variables.

Afghanistan USSR vs. US

<u>Basic Interest at Stake</u>	<u>Intensity of Interest</u>			
	<u>Survival</u>	<u>Vital</u>	<u>Major</u>	<u>Peripheral</u>

Defense of Homeland	USSR			US
Economic Well Being		USSR		US
Favorable World Order		USSR	US	
Ideological	USSR		US	
Islam		USSR		US

A. Defense of homeland

American position:

Afghanistan is not today, nor has it ever been, a component in American national security plans. It is not contiguous to US terrain. Contacts between the US and Afghanistan have been limited. The United States recognized Afghanistan as part of a Soviet Sphere of influence. It has never been included as an American ally, been a factor in US policy except for assisting Pakistan, or even been a signatory of a US treaty. Following the loss of Iran as the hinge-pin of US South

West Asian containment policy, President Carter declared this region a vital interest. Carter considered the Soviet invasion a threat to the balance of power. However, Afghanistan still did not figure into American plans. Afghanistan was, and remains, a peripheral intensity interest to American defense of homeland. The one advantage to the current Soviet quagmire in this nation is that it diverts Soviet resources and attention from other parts of the world, providing an advantage to US policies. This has been especially true in the third world.

Soviet position:

From the Soviet perspective, involvement in Afghanistan is a survival intensity interest. Afghanistan is contiguous to the Soviet borders. Security of the southern flank is a strong, historic and continuing Soviet fear. It closely coincides with Soviet national goals. Following the Iranian revolution, Soviets felt that the United States would invade Iran to protect American interests. Extending from the political culture of Tzarist Russia through the Soviet Union today and conditioned by their experiences in the Second World War, Kremlin leaders are constantly aware of the threat to their terrain. Secretary-General Gorbachev expressed his concern for the situation in Afghanistan at the most recent Congress of the Central Committee of the CPSU, calling his nations involvement in Afghanistan critical. The primary goal of the Soviets is to stop the resistance. No cost-- economic, political or personal-- exceeds the value of defense of the Soviet borders

B. Economic Well being

American position:

The United States has no economic interest in Afghanistan. Afghanistan provides no product or resource to US markets. The only possible significance, that Afghanistan might play for the United States economically, is the threat which might be perceived by a Soviet expansionist move toward the Persian Gulf oil lanes. If such threat were to materialize, then the intensity of US interest might increase, but not in the economic sense.

Soviet position:

The Soviet Union has important economic interests in Afghanistan. Since the end of the Second World War the Soviets have been Kabul's main benefactor. They have installed facilities and made investments which they expect to pay off. Natural Gas is a major import from Afghanistan. While the Soviet Union has sufficient quantities of this resource at home, it is cheaper and easier for them to import natural gas from Afghanistan than to transport it from their own stocks. Natural gas is used for industry in the Central Asian Republics and is important for the expansion of those industries. The loss of their Afghan source of natural gas would severely constrict Central Asian industry, limiting development.

C. Favorable World Order

American position:

America's strongest intensity interest in Afghanistan is the desire to see a favorable world order. American's regard it as their duty to protect the interests of the oppressed, the weak and the poor. American's perceive their role, as a great world superpower, to be the maintenance of the global status quo. As such, following the Second World War the United States adopted a policy of containment. Soviet global expansion is a threat to the status quo and world peace when looking through an American lens. President Carter's reactions to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is the example of the intensity of American resolve. Unfortunately, world public opinion, like American public opinion, does not last indefinitely. Public Opinion is molded to a certain extent by the media. The media operates on the new and sensational. After seven years of occupation, Afghanistan is neither new nor sensational news. Public outrage over the Soviet invasion has decreased accordingly.

Soviet position:

The Soviet perspective is that their actions in Afghanistan were justified to maintain a balance of power, which suited their interpretation of the status quo. Afghanistan was already a Marxist regime, before the Soviet intervention to stabilize and provide fraternal assistance, . The Soviets saw it as their duty to prevent the PDPA from being replaced, or allowing the gains of the revolution from being manipulated by a 'cult of personality' in the person of Amin. Before

attempting the intervention, the Soviets fully expected it to have been like Czechoslovakia in 1968, a short and successful action. Had they known the strength of the resistance movement they now face, it must be seriously questioned whether they would have undertaken the adventure. Afghanistan has placed Soviet policy throughout the Third World in jeopardy. It therefore is in the Soviet interest to keep talks alive in the United Nations to divert attention from the real issues.

D. Ideological interests

American position:

The United States has a strong ideological and moral interest in Afghanistan. This interest has developed intensity since the Soviet invasion. Next to providing for a favorable world order, ideological interests are of major importance. Providing humanitarian and military assistance to the Afghan resistance movement is consistent with our own American belief and value system. The United States is concerned for the freedom, welfare and right to self-determination of the Afghan people. The United States is also concerned for the continued credibility of our position in South West Asia; if America were to stop showing concern for the Afghan cause, then a strong signal would be sent to American allies.

Soviet position:

One of the most intense issues at stake in the Afghan crisis is the irreversibility of the revolution. Lenin believed that revolution would come to societies when they reached an appropriate stage. It is

questionable whether or not Afghanistan was this stage, but the fact that revolution came cannot be doubted. From the Soviet perspective, there can be no compromise. To allow a compromise would be to confess that Marxism-Leninism is not infallible and inevitable, and that the very foundation of the Soviet nation is rotten. The fundamental prestige of the system rests on the credibility of Marxist-Leninist ideology; the irreversibility of the Afghan revolution will remain a survival intensity interest.

E. Islam

American position:

The impact of Islam in Afghanistan is basically different from other South West Asian societies. Islam is a traditional and underlying component of life at the tribal level. Americans have a fundamental misunderstanding of Afghan politics; part of this problem is that we fail to fully comprehend the nature of Afghan culture and society. Americans, due to the environment in which we develop, tend to overlook the significance of Islam and the tribal structure of Afghan society. American interest in this variable remains as before, a peripheral intensity interest.

Soviet position:

The Soviet Union, like the United States, failed to fully realize the nature of the Afghan state before their 1979 intervention. Afghan rulers have always required the consent and recognition of the tribes in order to be legitimate. The line of legitimate Afghan leaders ended in

1978 with Daoud's departure. The imposition of central rule by an unpopular revolution will not successfully consolidate the Afghan state. The Soviet Union is proud of its nationalities policy. But it is obvious that they failed to account for the specific nature of Islam and tribal structure in Afghanistan. An example might be the movement of Soviet Muslim Central Asians into the Afghan bureaucracy. Whether on purpose or accidental, this policy earned the Soviets the resentment and indignation of the Pashto majority in the cities. The Soviets see the Central Asian nationalities as a living testimonial to the success of the Leninist nationality policy. In this Soviet view, Soviet Rule produced a nation out of what were little more than tribal structures a generation ago. Gorbachev's initiatives indicate Soviet recognition of the significance of Islam in Afghanistan today. This variable is a vital importance to Soviet success in their Afghan policy.

VII. Conclusion

The objective of this analysis is two-fold. First, to develop a framework by which to compare the national interests of the Soviet Union and the United States. This analysis an effort to develop some common ground for comparison and contrast. Second, having developed a framework for analysis to apply it to the Southwest Asian region. The framework adopted here seeks to examine the perspectives of both actors, while avoiding the problem of mirror-imaging. Mirror-imaging the perspectives of Soviets and Americans tends to obscure the real issues at hand. Societies differ, therefore, their perspectives of reality differ and so will their ways of handling challenges to their respective positions in the international environment.

The Southwest Asian region provides an interesting environment to apply this model. South West Asia was selected because of the significant challenges to both the Soviet and American positions in light of the Iranian Revolution and the Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan. Soviet and American interests compete head to head in this critical region. The events of 1978 and 1979 were great challenges to the positions of both the United States and the Soviet Union, in terms of international prestige and implications to their respective foreign policies. Therefore, South West Asia was an excellent region to select for study.

A. Limits of the Model

The model developed in Chapter II is not a universally applicable framework. There are several limits which must be considered. First,

the concept of 'national interest' is difficult , if not impossible, to define. This is complicated by the sparse amount of theoretical literature in the field on the concept of the 'national interest' and the loose usage of the term by many sources. This analysis provides a definition, which while useful in this study, may not be suitable for all similar case studies. The socio-economic-political systems of the Soviet Union and the United States are diverse and differ in many aspects. It is a difficult task to provide an operational definition which can compare and contrast the interests of both without mirror-imaging one nation against the other.

This framework measures only the intensity of variables. It does not prescribe a course of action, or policy options, for decision makers. Furthermore, this model cannot predict the use of force or any other instrument of foreign policy. However, in providing a measurement of relative positions, it may be possible for policy makers to determine more effective strategies of action. There is some utility to a model which remains explanatory rather than prescriptive, in that it provides a more complete framework to fully understand the various facets of a particular problem.

Another limit of this model is its difficulty in use. It is a complex task for an analyst, using the framework of analysis described in this study, to totally divorce himself from his own cultural bias. If you are an American, then you tend to view the world from an American perspective. Likewise, if you are a Soviet, then you tend to see things in light of your own Soviet cultural and political perspective. An Analyst

using this method must take care to ensure that he continually asks himself if he is considering both sides of an issue.

This analysis is further limited in terms of its scope. Due to the limited space and time in which to prepare this study only case studies of Afghanistan and Iran were undertaken. To fully understand the significance of Soviet and American interests in this region would require examination of interests in the surrounding region. Significant changes might be observed if case studies of Pakistan, India, Iraq, Turkey and Saudi Arabia were considered.

Variables selected in this study may not be all inclusive. Others using this model may desire to add additional variables to explain particular issues relevant in a specific area. In this case, Islam was chosen as a variable which accounts for the dominant religious and nationalistic force in South West Asia. In South West Asia, not considering the impact of this variable could result in some of the same, myopic judgements both Soviet and American decision makers have been accused of in their policy actions relating to the region. Likewise the individual variables are not necessarily mutually exclusive; to a certain extent bleed-over occurs and each variable has an effect upon the others.

B. Strengths of the Model.

The primary strength of the paradigm developed in this thesis is the definition of a concept for National Interest. The concept of National Interest, as presented in the literature, is somewhat ambiguous and multi-faceted. The operational definition offered in this

analysis may not be all inclusive, but it does attempt to develop a model which better explains the concept. By combining Alexander George's method of 'Focused Comparison' with Nuechterlein's variables of the National Interest, a systematic method which considers the perspectives of both actors results. The paradigm developed in this analysis allows interests to be compared without mirror-imaging perspectives, the hazards of which have already been pointed-out. As such, this model allows the analyst to isolate various facets of the collective national interest and ask specific questions about those variables. The paradigm developed here is flexible and useful.

Comparing the positions of the Soviet Union and the United States in this region, there are a series of key factors which are obvious and necessary to keep in mind. First, the National Interest is a function of a specific time period. Likewise, time is critical to the intensity of an interest. For example, public outrage over the Vietnam war, Iranian Hostage crisis, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the United States is less today than yesterday. At the same time, as seen in the Soviet Union, Afghanistan is becoming a growing concern as the Gorbachev regime attempts to motivate public sentiment for the Soviet position. National Interest, therefore, fluctuates. While a specific type of interest will always exist; the intensity of a given variable will fluctuate with time.

Another factor is the comparison of stated policies or courses of action with observed results. The National Interest is not necessarily what the national leadership says it is at any given point in time. This is

especially true of vital issues. As an example; After the Iranian revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Carter's declaration that South West Asia was vital interest may have been a function of current situation, losses in other regions, and his own personal commitment, rather than an actual vital National Interest to which he would have committed troops. This inconsistency is not limited to the United States. Likewise, while the Soviets say they are willing to disengage, how close will they actually come to actually doing so? Or when the Soviets say that their policy is self-determination for nationalities, how much of that policy is actually allowed to become reality?

The national leadership and the media are instrumental in formulating public support or non-support for particular issues of interest. Whether it is called black or white propaganda or just media hype, the fact remains that the public opinion can be modified, at least temporarily. In the United States, this is evidenced by changes of public opinion with Presidential Administration changes. A comparable persuasive role of the Press may not be possible in Soviet Union because of the nature of Soviet political system. However, it is obvious from recent coverage of Afghanistan in the Soviet Press that the media is considered instrumental in modifying Soviet public opinion; in this case to support the objectives of the invasion.

National Interest is a function of perspective. . .in other words where you sit is where you stand. In the sphere of international politics this observation is especially apparent. Analysts cannot afford to

ignore the respective positions of their nation, nor can they afford to ignore the relative position of the other powers. Analysts must be certain to make policy recommendations, which while considering the opponents perspective, are in the best interest of the nation--Soviet or American.

A final factor concerns the relative relationship among variables. While Nuechterline's model accepts no priority among variables [Ch2, note 13] it is important to recognize the significance of a nation's defense of homeland. Any threat against the home land of an actor could be judged a survival intensity threat. In this sense, it is apparent that the Soviet Union has an intense interest in those actions which occur on her borders. The United States is equally concerned, but has no historical experience with strong direct threats on the sovereignty of her borders. For the United States, Soviet historic preoccupation with security provides a factor which might be exploited in dealing with the Soviet Union.

C. Lessons for Policy Makers.

While this model attempts to measure the relative intensity of an actor's interest, the most important lesson of this analysis deals with how an actor will react to secure his interest. The most important fact is that an actor will always seek to maximize his relative position vis-a-vis others. The concept or operational definition of a National Interest may differ, either internationally or within each nation. However, this does not change the maxim that each actor will seek to make the best of his respective position. In the South West Asian region the interests

of the Soviet Union are seemingly more intense because of historical experiences, and because of the geostrategic position of both Iran and Afghanistan.

It is important to consider the historical context of Soviet and American interests in this region. Up until 1945 Russia, followed by the Soviet Union competed for influence in this region with Britain. The United States, consistent with its role in international politics, remained disinterested in this region, except for some limited economic ties, until after the initiation of the Cold War. From 1947 the primary facet of American interest in this region was its significant geostrategic position as a component of US global containment strategy. A second interest, but not nearly as strong as the containment role, was the significance of Persian Gulf oil to the economies of Europe and the United States. In this light, Iran developed into an important trading partner, as it sought outside assistance to develop.

Afghanistan has always been a distant interest for the United States. Afghan attempts to develop ties with the United States were not reciprocated by the United States government. As such, Afghanistan, under the guidance of Premier Daoud turned to the Soviets for developmental assistance in the early 1960s. Afghanistan's goal, consistent with their historically independent position vis-a-vis Iran, was primarily to catch up with the developed world. US policy makers failed to take any major interest in Afghanistan until the murder of the American Ambassador. President Carter reacted with intense interest only following the Soviet invasion in December of 1979.

American primary interest in the current plight of the Afghan people is humanitarian and in terms of American concern for the ability of national self-determination.

The Soviet position is often difficult for Americans to understand. Given the political culture of Soviet decision makers, it is easy to understand their intense preoccupation with survival and defense of homeland, when analyzed from their perspective. In both Iran and Afghanistan, the Soviets say that they were afraid of Western influence creeping into their sphere of supremacy. Both Iran and Afghanistan are contiguous to the Soviet Union and in Soviet perception, albeit paranoid, prime territory for the flow of counter-revolutionary ideas into their system.

For the Soviets, primary interests in both Iran and Afghanistan are defense of homeland and challenges to their ideological positions. Economics and World order interests are less intense. In both case studies, the Soviets have only recently awakened to the significance of Islam. Comparatively, the United States has little interest in the defense of homeland aspect. In Iran, American interests were spurred by containment first, and then by the significance of Persian Gulf oil. Since the Iranian Revolution and the Soviet Afghan invasion, US interests have been primarily oriented toward maintaining the world status quo of power and American traditional interest in national self-determination. The United States too, is slowly awakening to the significance of Islam and ethnicity in this region.

In summary the South West Asian region illustrates the importance of a region distant from the United States and not so distant from the Soviet Union which challenges the prestige of each in the international realm. It is a region, with historic significance, which in the past has been overlooked and misunderstood all too often by both the European Great powers and the post World War II superpowers. Policy makers of both the Soviet Union and the United States have difficult choices to make in relation to the risks and costs versus benefits of options in South West Asia. This analysis has sought to help clarify the respective positions of both the Soviet Union and the United States.

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